







# LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO

## THE PEOPLE

OF THE

### *UNITED STATES OF AMERICA*

ON THE CONDUCT OF THE

PAST AND PRESENT ADMINISTRATIONS

OF THE

### AMERICAN GOVERNMENT,

TOWARDS

### *GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE*

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BY COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKENS,

FORMERLY SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES.

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**COLONEL PICKERING,**

**TO THE**

**PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.**

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**INTRODUCTION.**

**LETTER I.**

**FELLOW CITIZENS,**

**BEFORE** I present to you a view of the past and present condition of our country, and exhibit the characters of men who have produced, or greatly influenced that condition, it is proper that I should place before you a plain representation of my own. For you ought to be satisfied, that the writer who asks your attention, possessed the means of acquiring an adequate knowledge of his subject, and integrity to present it with truth.

My name has for so many years been the theme of reproach with my enemies, and their publications having been in fact, though not in form addressed to

you, as the proper tribunal to decide on the merit or demerit of my conduct in public life, justice would require that, prior to a final judgment, I should be heard in my own defence. This right, however, I should waive, were my personal interest or reputation alone at stake. Content with the esteem of men of the first distinction among my countrymen, for their discernment, virtue and patriotism, and with an approving conscience, I would not again, on my own account, take the trouble to repel the slanders with which bad men continue to assail me. As it regards myself, these libellers miss their aim—Far from wounding my feelings, their malevolent reproaches bear witness that I am not destitute of merit. The unwearied, malignant efforts of these men to destroy my reputation, demonstrate that the truths I have heretofore exhibited, have annoyed them and their employers; while, perhaps, they anticipate a display of more truths, the proper effects of which, by reviving their slanders, they may hope to defeat.

Indeed, fellow citizens, I have gone but a little way, in spreading before you the errors of your rulers; would to GOD that they were chargeable with no more than errors. Certain it is, they have plunged our country into a state of degradation and disgrace, and brought upon it calamities never before experienced. It is time they were stripped of their disguises, and exhibited in their naked characters to your view. This is one great object in my present undertaking. For no hope can be entertained of an advantageous change in the condition of our country, until you shall be convinced that the leaders of the party, which for ten years past have governed it, are not worthy of your confidence—I embark in it with reluctance—because to say nothing of the

time and labour I must bestow upon it, in exposing them, I shall unavoidably expose the nakedness of my country; when, if compatible with truth, I would infinitely rather speak the praises of both. But to authorise even a distant hope of producing general conviction, plain truths, however mortifying, must be told; and the belief of them can alone rescue our country from impending ruin. Perhaps for entertaining this apparently forlorn hope, I may be charged with vanity. But if truth is, before hand, to be presumed unavailing, why then the cause of our country is to be given up in despair. But until ruin actually overwhelms us, I will not despair.

In the prosecution of this work, I will present to you faithful pictures drawn from the life—from the words and actions of men. I will lay before you facts. And where the nature of the case renders facts unattainable, I will state the circumstances which furnish the ground of rational belief. And because the unexampled state of things demands that facts which are the basis of my address, should be presented to your consideration, with whatever weight the testimony of a known witness can impart, and believing my statements to be true, and my reasoning just, I shall subscribe them with my proper name. Should there be any errors, they will be unintentional; and when fairly exhibited, as frankly confessed.

I am aware that I shall draw upon myself a host of slanderers, who from all quarters will fall upon me without mercy. They, destitute alike of facts and arguments, will impudently pronounce my statements to be untrue, my reasoning false, and my character too base to merit your attention. And if you

yield to their bold assertions without evidence, my labour will be lost. But, my fellow citizens, it is for *you* that I expose myself to all this persecution; to the ill-will, the hatred and the vengeance of the men whose arts, intrigues and deceptions I must necessarily lay open. For *your own sake* then, I entreat you to give me a patient hearing. If my story be long, so is the series of your wrongs. And these you have suffered, not for *your* ultimate advantage, but that your *leaders, pretended patriots, might obtain and hold power and place and the emoluments of office.*—Yes, my fellow citizens, to their ambition, avarice, envy and revenge, your great interests and the honour of our country have been sacrificed.

If in executing the arduous work I have undertaken, I shall sometimes use words of a coarse texture, I beg every reader to be assured, that these will be introduced not from choice, but necessity; the more distinctly to exhibit the characters of the persons and things intended to be described. Moral, like natural deformities, require their appropriate traits and colours.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

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## LETTER II.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

SEEING that the requisite investigation of numerous facts, scattered through a long space of years, will require much time and labour, and consequently, the exhibition of the important conclu-

sions thence resulting, be at a distance: it is fit that at the outset I should inform you what those conclusions will be—And I entertain no doubt of shewing them to be as correct as they are interesting. I expect to satisfy you—

1. That in our revolutionary war, the aids afforded by France were small, and covertly given—until by maintaining the war by our own strength, for three years, and capturing a whole British Army, we had rendered our final success certain.

2. That although the French Government at length furnished very considerable aids in men and money, and the co-operation of her navy—yet that all this proceeded from no regard to us, from no desire to promote the interests of the United States; but merely to diminish the formidable power of her rival, Great Britain, by lopping off from her empire, so large a portion of her dominions as the United States.

3. That when, after braving for seven years the dangers and calamities of war, it was drawing to a close: when Great Britain, willing to make peace, sent a minister to Paris, to negotiate with the ministers of the United States, the French government strenuously endeavoured to prevent our obtaining such terms as the dignity and interests of the United States required. That when the French government found one of our ministers too enlightened, too patriotic and inflexibly firm to abandon the interests of his country—when it found that he would not give up the fisheries—the Western Territory (where several of our populous states are bounded,) and the free

navigation of the river Mississippi, then that insidious government actually commenced an intrigue with *our enemy*, with the British government, to accomplish those objects! An intrigue that was defeated by our sagacious, vigilant and faithful minister, operating on the sound policy and returning good-will of Britain—'This minister was Mr. Jay. Mr. Adams was then in Holland; but as soon as he reached Paris, he heartily co-operated with Mr. Jay. With these transactions, which hereafter I shall lay before you in detail, not only Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, but Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison are well acquainted.

4. That the people of the United States, knowing that the French government rendered to us important aids in our revolutionary war—but not knowing its treacherous attempts finally to rob us of some of its fairest fruits; and filled with gratitude for those aids (given as we then imagined, with generous magnanimity) felt the sincerest friendship and attachment to France. That these honest prejudices in her favour continued unimpaired, after the French revolution commenced, and our present general government was formed, was eagerly seized on by a few ambitious men, with Mr. Jefferson at their head, as the sure means of ingratiating themselves into your favour; by that means to grasp the whole power of the union; while at the same time, and with the same object in view. they cherished and aggravated against Great Britain the popular resentments and hatreds which the evils of civil war, and the atrocious acts of the British forces in the early period of it, had engendered; forgetting,

or not feeling, the just and magnanimous sentiment in our declaration of independence, "to hold the British, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends."

5. That on these two foundations (your gratitude and friendship to France, and your prejudices and hatred against England) Mr. Jefferson (stealing your hearts by a thousand plausible, but hollow professions of republican simplicity, republican economy, ardent patriotism, and hatred of royalty,) on these two foundations, I say, Mr. Jefferson rose to power; undermining, by all the arts which cunning could devise, and concealed ambition practice, the really republican administration of Washington. It will fall in my way, and it will be one object of these addresses, to delineate the character of Mr. Jefferson as exhibited in his acts and writings, for a series of years, before he mounted the chair of state; and to describe his measures and professions during his eight years presidency. The result, I trust, will be your full conviction of his systematic hypocrisy and duplicity, by means of which you have been beguiled into a warm admiration of the man, and a fatal support of his measures. I trust you will see, that under the plain republican garb, has been concealed inordinate ambition; that in the soft shade of affected mildness and candour, lurked a malignant spirit of intolerance and persecution; that deceit was veiled by plausible professions of sincerity and good faith; that his much talked of economy, was a cover for waste and profusion; and that patriotism itself was assumed for a screen, behind which he contrived schemes, dishonourable to the nation, and pregnant with



ruin : but in which he manifested a disposition and a wish to persevere, although they should end in your destruction.

6. That by the arts above mentioned, Mr. Jefferson having risen to power, he saw they must be continued in order to preserve it ; all however, resting on your unlimited but misplaced confidence in his supposed ability, integrity, and patriotism. Let me, my fellow citizens, call your pointed attention to this matter. It furnishes the *key* to the conduct of your government for the last ten years. Look back, I pray you, and review that period. You will find, that (one article excepted, which I shall hereafter explain) all the subjects of dispute between the United States, and Great Britain, remain unsettled ; while Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison have been uttering professions without number of their sincere desire to adjust them ! Will you any longer trust in these professions ? Will you believe that Great Britain, oppressed with the weight of war unexampled in the history of the world, can *choose* to avoid an accommodation with the United States ? When our friendship would be so useful to her, will you believe her even *unwilling* to do us *common justice*, in order to obtain it ? When she has not (the broken remains of Spain and Portugal excepted) one ally in the world, and the nations of Europe, swayed by Bonaparte, are in arms against her—is it possible, think you, for her to be so blind to her *interest*, as to refuse the hand of amity and good will, if really stretched out towards her by the United States ? Can you believe that she would not be willing, even to make some *sacrifices* in order to restore harmony, and a full commercial intercourse between the two countries ?

An impartial observer, ignorant of the arts that have been practised to deceive you, would say, that all this was impossible.

My fellow citizens, upon an investigation you will find that the fault is in your rulers. They are aware, that if by fair and honourable negotiations, all our differences with Great Britain should be adjusted, they would lose a strong hold of their popularity, while they incurred the displeasure (which they so much dread) of Europe's tyrant, and as far as *their* subserviency can make him, *our* haughty and insulting master. Were the disputes with Britain adjusted, they could then no longer excite your fears of being betrayed by the Federalists, as British partizans, or corrupted by British gold. They must then cease to clamour against "the tyrants of the sea (as they call the British) for exercising what they consider as the belligerent rights by the law of nations, in capturing neutral vessels engaged in commerce contrary to that law, and taking *their own seamen* from your merchant vessels. They must then stop their falsehearted lamentations over impressed American seamen, for whose relief a satisfactory arrangement would then be made. Then too, they would be deprived of the favorite topick of complaint, the outrageous attack on the frigate Chesapeake," for which Great Britain has repeated her endeavours to make satisfaction, but which, I expect to shew you, your own government has frustrated. And then, too, we should hear no more of Mr. Jefferson's prating about "the violated rights of the ocean."

7. I will prove to you that the Embargo, that distinguished curse of our country, was not imposed "to preserve our ships, our merchandize and

our seamen"—that this was a deceitful pretence—and that the deception might not appear, two of the papers communicated as the principal ground of the embargo, were withdrawn by Mr. Jefferson. This covered the affair with mystery, which astonished and confounded the public mind, and induced its acquiescence in the measure; on the presumption that some cause of mighty moment existed to justify so great an evil. These two papers have since been made publick. They will now speak for themselves, and verify what I wrote three years ago that "neither presented any new ground to justify an embargo."

8. I will shew you that the non-intercourse, the half-brother of the embargo, was a measure as foolish and absurd as it was mischievous: and that the injuries and losses produced by it, were wanton sacrifices to the pitiful pride of our government, unwilling to acknowledge its error and improvidence (and in the knowing ones the deception) in laying the embargo; for which the non-intercourse was a substitute, a *staging* to break the fall from the embargo to nothing.

9. To give a just view of the French government in its relation to the United States, I will examine its conduct from an early period of the French revolution; the piracies and enormous ~~spoliations~~ <sup>spoliations</sup> it authorised on our commerce, and its outrages and insults towards our government. I will present to your view the patient forbearance of the federal administrations, and their earnest endeavours to remove every cause of misunderstanding. And when all their efforts proved unavailing, you will be reminded of the energetic measures adopted to vindicate your rights and

maintain the honour and dignity of the nation. This period will embrace the mission of general Pinkney; and afterwards the more solemn embassy of generals Pinkney and Marshall, and Mr. Gerry. The abandonment of this energetick course will then be considered, and its consequences. The revival of the directorial system of plunder, outrage and insult, might then be brought into full view, with all the aggravations of which Napoleon Bonaparte alone was capable.


10. Forbearing to enumerate many other topics of discussion which will fall in my way as I proceed, I will here only add, that I expect to make it appear that if the measures of our government, so fatal to the national prosperity, have not been taken in concert with France; they have been contrived in subserviency to the views of the imperial tyrant. Otherwise his gross insults heaped upon our government, and even hurled in its face, added to the incalculable injuries to our citizens by his depredations on their property, in piracies and robberies unexampled in the annals of mankind, would not have been borne; but which have been borne with a tameness and submission, that, situated as are the United States, would have disgraced even slaves.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

## LETTER III.

## FELLOW CITIZENS,

IN my last number are stated the principal topics on which I purpose to address you. I have written, as I will continue to write, with a freedom which the times demand; but which the preachers of passive obedience and non-resistance to the measures of government, however oppressive and ruinous, will not fail to condemn. What! they will exclaim, can *he* be a *friend* to his country, who will not stand by its government? Must he not be its *enemy*, the hireling of a foreign nation, who dares to question the rectitude of his own government in its disputes with that foreign nation? Who, for instance, would offer an excuse for the British government, which has caused so many injuries, but a British tory, a British pensioner, a traitor, who had received British gold!

My fellow citizens! Have you been taught to believe that your rulers are incapable of erring? Incapable of injustice to a foreign nation? Incapable of seeking their own interests, and gratifying their ambition at your expence? Incapable of crimes? If  why in your constitution have you declared them amenable to justice? liable to impeachment and removal from office? to prosecution and punishment in the courts of law? Why was the press, already free, guarded by a special amendment to the constitution? Was this guard provided only that envy, malice, and revenge might with impunity, expose the errors of private citizens, and slander virtue

itself, when not clothed with power! No! History and experience proved that men in office, in places of power and trust, were sometimes unfaithful and corrupt—that it was not always easy to bring them to justice—that sometimes their offences were of a nature to evade the ordinary judicial process—that public shame and disgrace could be their only punishment. The press is free, that any of your fellow citizens may address you on any subject which can affect your interest, honour, safety, and general welfare. The improper, unwise, the unjust acts of the rulers of a nation, may be directly injurious to the citizens, they may also be injurious to foreign nations, and produce dangerous disputes, retaliation and war. When such are the effects or tendencies of their measures, he who sees them has a right, and it is his duty to bring them into public view, for the purpose of public correction. This right I will use—this duty I will attempt to perform. But another duty first demands my care to vindicate my own character, and exhibit my title to your attention.

I am, fellow citizens, in a singular situation—continually censured and reviled by every unprincipled wretch who prints a newspaper, or by his correspondents equally base; and yet rarely upon any specific charge on which I can come to an issue. In one case, indeed, this was done: I was accused of receiving British gold. At the instance of some of my friends, I consented that the libeller should be prosecuted. He was accordingly indicted, convicted, and punished by fine and imprisonment. His council, (Mr. Jefferson's district attorney in Massachusetts) with a view to mitigate the libeller's punishment, offered to the court a reason which must surprise all those who have formed their opinions of me

from the misrepresentations and lies of democratic prints—"That the fairness of my character was so well known, and my reputation so firmly established, the libel could have done me no injury."—But neither conviction in court—nor at the bar of reason (the tribunal to which, in addressing the People of the United States, I now appeal) can silence my accusers.—"The lies so oft overthrown are renewed"—and they will be repeated while the polluted prints which spread them abroad, receive the patronage of a deceived and abused people.

I have recently been called "a pensioner of Britain," while the accusers, far from attempting to prove it, do not themselves believe it. In the nature of things, it is impossible for any man to prove the negative, that he did not receive a bribe. What then is to be done? Is there such a thing as honesty in the world?—And what can an honest man oppose to such a naked accusation? Will a whole life, passed in the ways of virtue, serve to vindicate his innocence? Let then my unprincipled accusers examine my whole life, private as well as public—let them search diligently—and if they can find one dishonest act, a single departure from truth, one instance of deception, then, my fellow citizens, reject as unworthy of your notice, all the statements and reasoning which I have heretofore addressed, or shall hereafter address to you.

The herd of libellers, your pretended friends, but worst enemies, have the audacity to call me "An Old British Tory!" I am old, for I have lived 65 years. But from the year 1769, to the close of the revolutionary war (a space of 14 years) I was constantly engaged in opposing British taxation, British encroachments on our rights, and British arms.

Until the commencement of that war in 1775, no one person in my native town (Salem) was more actively engaged than I, (as my townsmen who survive to this day well know) in all the measures generally adopted in opposing British claims. After the war had commenced, the government of Massachusetts appointed me to various offices; some of them of no inconsiderable importance. From these I was called by General Washington to the army under his command, which I joined in June, 1777, in the office of adjutant general. In the preceding winter I had marched a regiment of seven hundred men, militia, from the county of Essex, part of a larger force from Massachusetts, all under the command of General Lincoln, to reinforce the main army. This winter campaign terminated at New Jersey, when General Washington's head quarters were, at Morristown. In September 1777, was fought the battle of Brandywine; and in October, that of Germantown. In both I was by the general's side, or executing his orders. In the close of 1777, I was appointed by congress, a member of the continental board of war, as were Generals Gates and Mifflin. In this station I served until August, 1780; when, on the resignation of General Greene, I was desired to accept, and I received from congress, the appointment of quarter master general; in which office I continued to the end of the war. In this last period, viz. in 1781, preparations were made for the siege of New York; but the French fleet of co-operation disappointed the commander in chief, by going into Chesapeake Bay. A British army, under the command of Lord Cornwallis, was then at Yorktown in Virginia. To capture this army was now the only object of hope for the residue of the campaign. Having received the



General's orders, I provided for the march of the troops destined for this service, and for the operations of the siege (at which I was present) in what respected my department. The capture of Yorktown and of another British army, in effect, put an end to the war.

What is now the reward of these long continued public services, in *opposition to* Great Britain, and during the war, in the arduous and important offices which I have mentioned? To be pronounced, by foreign renegadoes and home-bred villains, "*An old British Tory.*" And why this reproach? Because I did not join the party, with Mr. Jefferson at its head, which was constantly opposed to president Washington's administration. With that party and my countrymen generally, I rejoiced in the prospect of a free government to be established in France; but I did not shut my eyes to the enormities of the actors in the French revolution. And when afterwards, it became my official duty, in vindication of the conduct, and the honour of our own government and country, to state and display the injustice, the corruption, the outrages, and the insults of the French rulers, and the piracies by them authorized and committed on our commerce, I did not attempt to conceal, to excuse, or make apologies for them. And I dropped some intimations that our debt of gratitude to France, if not cancelled by her atrocious insults and injuries, was much less than Mr. Jefferson and his party wished to have you believe. But I presented things truly, according to my knowledge of facts, and to the best of my ability\*.—Hence I be-

\* The vindication here referred to, was contained in a letter, dated January, 1797, which I wrote by the direction of president

came obnoxious to the party, whose yelpers then set up their cry against me, and have ever since continued to growl and bark.—Let the watch word be given, and the whole pack open upon me, from Maine to Georgia.

But it cannot be concealed, that *I had other rewards* — THE MARKED APPROPRIATION OF THE WISE AND GOOD, to whom personally, or by reputation, my real character was known. And Washington, who first called me to the army, and witnessed my conduct there—Washington, whose pure integrity, and genuine patriotism none dare question, and even by eulogizing whom, now dead, his former enemies endeavour to filch some little share of renown—Washington, when president of the United States, also called me to a series of employments in civil life : in 1791, to the office of post master general, and in January, 1795, to the office of secretary for the department of war. In August, 1795, he charged me also with the department of state, of which in December following I was appointed secretary. Here it is due to myself to remark, that all these important and distinguished offices, military

Washington, to general Pinckney, our minister in Paris. In that letter, the subjects in controversy between the United States and France, were reviewed. It was of this review that chief justice Marshall, in his *Life of Washington* (vol. v. p. 726) thus expresses his opinion : “ It presented a minute and comprehensive detail of all the points of controversy which had arisen between the two nations, and defended the measures which had been adopted in America, with a clearness and strength of argument believed to be irresistible. To place the subject in a point of view, admitting of no possible misunderstanding, the secretary of state had annexed to his own full and demonstrative reasoning, documents establishing the real fact in each particular case, and the correspondence relating to it.”

and civil, were voluntarily conferred upon me. I never, directly or indirectly, asked for one. If any of my friends solicited them for me, I never knew it.—Having at the close of the year 1801, returned to my native state, the legislature, unsolicited, appointed me, in 1803, one of its senators in congress; in which station I have continued to this time—a period of eight years.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

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#### LETTER IV.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

ALTHOUGH the unsought appointments to the numerous offices detailed in my last address, will, by all candid men be admitted as strong evidence of my possessing some portion of ability to execute them, and of my fidelity to my country, yet the manner in which I was finally removed from office, having, among the uninformed, excited doubts, it may be necessary for me to clear them away.

I held the office of Secretary of State near five years. In May, 1800, I was dismissed by President Adams. On this dismissal (so little did it excite my sensibility) I should have remained for ever silent, had it not been made a subject of reproach. The dismissal, deprived *me* of no friends; on the contrary, it increased the ardour, and added to the number of those I had before. Of the friends common to both of us, it contributed to produce a general alienation from Mr. Adams.

I knew this gentleman was liable to intemperate passions. I was the subject of a paroxysm of his rage, the afternoon before he sent me notice that I might resign, "wishing *me* to name the day when the resignation should take place." This tempest, however, was not displayed to *me*, but to a friend of mine, a member of Congress, who was going home, and called on Mr. Adams to take leave. To me, who during more than three years, held the office of Secretary of State under him, Mr. Adams once only exhibited any passion; and that on an occasion which furnished no cause for the slightest emotion. It was this: His son John Quincy Adams, in 1794, was appointed Charge d'Affaires or minister resident of the United States at the Hague.—Just before General Washington's last presidency expired, he raised John Q. Adams to the highest grade of minister plenipotentiary to the court of Lisbon. But his father soon succeeding to the office of President, he changed the Son's destination from Lisbon to Berlin. He had been commissioned for Lisbon. I had now to make out a new commission. In the draught, I called John Q. Adams, *late minister resident of the United States at the Hague*: doubting whether it would be correct to call him *late minister plenipotentiary of the United States at the court of Lisbon*; seeing that not having gone thither, of course he had not been received in that character. I concluded, however, before a fair copy of the commission should be made, to wait on the president, that he might direct the form of it to be altered if he thought fit. He read on till he came to "late minister resident of the United States at the Hague," when he burst into a passion; and with a loud and rapid voice exclaimed, "not late minister resident at the Hague, but late

minister plenipotentiary of the United States at the court of Lisbon, to which office he was appointed by General Washington—not by me—and so he shall be called!”—Then lowering his tone, but speaking with earnestness, he added, “ I am sorry that my son ever went abroad as a minister : I wish he had staid at home : for there was not a pen in the United States, of which the jacobins were so much afraid as of my son’s.” The father and the son, and these very jacobins, have since shaken hands together.

I have said that Mr. Adams gave me notice that I might resign, and wished me to name the day. This transaction having excited considerable interest, the public curiosity may be gratified by the perusal of our correspondence entire :

“ *Philadelphia, May 10, 1800.*

“ SIR,

“As I perceive a necessity of introducing a change in the administration of the office of State, I think it proper to make this communication of it to the present Secretary of State, that he may have an opportunity of resigning if he chooses. I should wish the day on which his resignation is to take place to be named by himself. I wish for an answer to this letter on or before Monday morning, because the nomination of a successor must be sent to the Senate as soon as they sit.

“ With esteem, I am, sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

Honourable Timothy Pickering,  
Secretary of State.”

It required no great sagacity to discover the latent object of this *seemingly* mild proposal. It was the first notice the President gave me of his intentions. Mr. Adams imagined that I would *resign* to avoid the apparent disgrace of a *dismissal*. He wished me to commit *political suicide*, to screen *himself* from the *odium* of being my *executioner*. Preferring a *dismissal* by which I knew it was not in *his* power to *dishonour* me, I sent him the following answer :

“ DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

“ *Philadelphia, Monday morning,  
May 12th, 1800.*

“ SIR,

“ I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated last Saturday, stating, that ‘ as you perceive a necessity of introducing a change in the administration of the office of State, you think it proper to make this communication of it to the present Secretary of State, that he may have an opportunity of resigning, if he chooses;’ and that ‘ you wish the day on which his resignation is to take place to be named by himself.’

Several matters of importance in the office, in which my agency will be useful, will require my diligent attention until about the close of the present quarter. I had indeed contemplated a continuance in office until the 4th of March next; when, if Mr. Jefferson were elected President (an event which in your conversation with me last week you considered as certain) I expected to go out of course. An apprehension of that event first led me

to determine not to remove my family this year to the city of Washington; because to establish them there would oblige me to incur an extraordinary expense, which I had not the means of defraying; whereas, by separating myself from my family, and living there eight or nine months, with strict economy, I hoped to meet that expense, should the occasion occur. Or, if I then went out of choice, *that saving* would enable me to subsist my family a few months longer; and perhaps aid me in transporting them into the woods, where I had land, though all wild and unproductive, and where like my first ancestors in New-England, I expected to commence a settlement on *bare creation*. I am happy that I now have this resource: and those, most dear to me, have fortitude enough to look at the scene, without dismay, and even without regret. Nevertheless, after deliberately reflecting on the overture you have been pleased to make to me, I do not feel it my duty to resign.

I have the honour to be,

With great respect, sir,

Your obedient servant,

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Mr. Adams,

*President of the United States."*

In about an hour after sending this answer to the President, I received the following reply :

· " *Philadelphia, May 12, 1800.*

· " SIR,

· " Divers causes and considerations, essential to the administration of the government, in my judgment,

requiring a change in the Department of State, you are hereby discharged from any further service as Secretary of State.

JOHN ADAMS,  
President of the United States.

May 12, 1800."

The above reply was in a cover addressed and delivered to me at my office. I was putting the finishing hand to the forms, regulations, and instructions, to be transmitted to the marshals of States and Secretaries of Territories, which I had prepared agreeable to the requisition of the act of Congress, for taking the second census of the United States. As I knew not who was to succeed me, or when a new secretary might take his seat, in order that the public service might sustain no injury, and in legal consideration the fraction of a day not being regarded, I staid in the office until evening to complete that work.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

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## LETTER V.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

NEARLY eight years elapsed before I took any public notice of my removal from office; and then by constraint; to repel a fresh slander on my character. It was in a letter dated April 22, 1808, to the late Governor Sullivan of Massachusetts; in which I said—"I am reproached for having been



removed from the Office of Secretary of State, on the supposition that this would not have been done but for some sufficient cause, honourable to the President and dishonourable to me. On this I must remark, that I had held the office about a year and a half under General Washington, and three years and two months under President Adams, and until ten months only remained of his own term of office. For what did he remove me? He never told me. Was it for any dishonest or dishonourable act? He will not say it. Was it for British attachments? He will not say it. Was it for my incapacity? If that were the cause, and it be well founded, a statesman of his experience and discernment ought sooner to have made the discovery.

But my fellow citizens, when I asked "for what did Mr. Adams remove me?"—I was not ignorant of the immediate cause. I was indeed shocked at the depravity of the man; yet he being then, as now, a private citizen, and never likely to be more, I meant, as it regarded myself, to let him depart in peace. If I have changed my mind it has not been without reason.—Besides his open apostacy from the cause which he had early and warmly espoused and supported, which had given him respectability in the eyes of those who had loaded him with public honours, and finally raised him to the first station in his country; he has, with the temper of an assassin, assailed the character of a man, more wise and more righteous than himself; of a man, whom he hated while living, without daring publicly to reproach him: but whose character now he is dead, he has attempted with all the rancour of envy, with all the virulence of malice, to mangle and defile. This malignity must not pass unavenged. To hold such

baseness up to public scorn and detestation, will coincide with the vindication due, in my own case, to myself, to my family, to my friends and to my country.

My sudden removal from office excited among federalists not a little surprise; and to my fellow citizens generally it appeared as unaccountable as it was unexpected. Various conjectures were formed; but all were erroneous. A junto of democrats were in the secret; but three years elapsed before I was let into it. Federalists ascribed it to the resentment of a man of ungoverned passions, for my opposition to some acts of his administration: and to this opinion I was myself inclined; although the acts to which I refer had passed long before. For I believe Mr. Adams capable of *hoarding up his hatreds, of brooding over them, and at length of bringing them forth with increased malignity*—This spirit he has exemplified in his late atrocious attack on the memory of the deceased Hamilton. And mine, though of comparatively small account, would not have escaped, had I also been numbered with the dead.

To the questions before asked relative to my removal from office, I add one more—"Did Mr. Adams dismiss me for keeping back dispatches?" This has been asserted in some democratic papers; and in congress by Mr. Eppes, son-in-law to the late President Jefferson.

On the 30th of December, 1808, in the House of Representatives, Mr. Eppes commenting on my first letter to Mr. Sullivan, Governor of Massachusetts, concerning the embargo (every statement and even conjecture, in which, subsequent events have justified) thus expressed himself:

“Immediately after the measure (the embargo) was adopted last winter, what takes place, sir?—A man distinguished by the favour of the people, a man advanced in years, *the very man who in 1798 kept back the dispatches from Mr. Adams (then President) and almost plunged us into a war with France by this act*—what does he do? In 1808, he displays the same spirit of hostility to France which he manifested in '98; writes a letter, in which he attributes the embargo to French influence, to the mandates of Buonaparte.”—Being asked by a member of the House to name the person he referred to, Mr. Eppes named ME. Hear my defence.

1. In the first place, I say, that I am utterly ignorant of the alledged fact. I do not recollect to have heard, till within three years past, of any “dispatches kept back;” and the tale then surprised me by its novelty.

2. If any dispatches coming to my hands were kept back from the President, it must have been purely accidental; and even of this I am yet absolutely ignorant. To render it criminal it must have been done intentionally—Now if Mr. Eppes meant to say that I kept back any dispatches intentionally, or with a design to plunge the United States into a war with France, then I answer that the charge is utterly void of truth. I presume Mr. Eppes told the tale as he had heard it. From what source he derived it I shall not deign to inquire.

3. If I had intentionally, or from culpable negligence, kept back dispatches, and of the importance ascribed to them by Mr. Eppes, will it be believed that Mr. Adams would never have mentioned it to me? And is not this single circumstance sufficient to stamp the story with falsehood? Let it also be

particularly noticed that the charge against me, is for keeping back dispatches in 1798, and that I was not removed from office till May, 1800. If I committed the alledged offence, what excuse can be offered by Mr. Adams's *new friends* or by *himself*, for his keeping me in office a year and a half or more, after the deed was done? Why did he not remove me without delay, and give that as the reason? Mr. Adams well knew that I was held in estimation by many distinguished citizens of the United States; and that my friends in Massachusetts in particular, (of which state both of us are natives) were numerous and of great influence, whom he could not fail to offend by dismissing me, unless he could assign an adequate cause. I know, when he did remove me, that this consideration did not escape his reflection. Whereas, had I been guilty of the offence at this late day conjured up against me, while it mortified, it would have silenced my friends; and I could never have held up my face in their presence. Among those friends were many whom I had not personally known. To a man, I believe, they had once been the friends of Mr. Adams. They continue *mine* to this day, and with increased regard. That they are not now *his*, we have his own testimony. Indeed that he had few, a very few friends in the United States *of any sort*, is necessarily to be inferred from his own declaration. Two obscure democrats in the interior of Massachusetts, *on the eve of an important election* in 1809, subscribed (for I understood they were incapable of writing it) a letter to Mr. Adams, replete with the most fulsome flattery, (the writer seems to have known what would best please his taste) in which they ask counsel of the "venerable father of New England."

His answer, marked throughout with his usual arrogance, egotism and vanity, thus concludes:—  
“ I always consider the *whole nation* as my children : but they have almost all been *undutiful* to me. You two gentlemen are almost the only ones, out of my own house, who have for a long time, and I thank you for it, expressed a filial affection for.—*John Adams.*”

4. My innocence is to be inferred, not only from what is already stated, but from Mr. Adams's own publications. I have read his letters, printed in Boston in 1809, on the subject of the embassy to France, in 1799, to which I must suppose the dispatches in question are understood to relate. These letters Mr. Adams has written for the purpose of justifying that embassy. He therein states at great length, the grounds on which he took that step ; referring to many private letters, and introducing one from Mr. Joel Barlow, received in the winter, 1798-9 ; all mentioning the desire of the French government to settle their differences with the United States. But these, he says, “ would not have influenced him to nominate a minister, if he had not received abundant assurances to the same effect, *from regular diplomatic sources.*” Of these he has published two letters from Mr. Talleyrand, French minister of foreign relations, which, Mr. Adams remarks, were communicated to Mr. Murray, American minister in Holland, and by him to the Executive of the United States. One of these two letters Mr. Adams sent to the Senate, with his nomination of Mr. Murray, the 18th of February, 1799. Now in all his tedious details on the subject, spread over near a hundred octavo pages, in which are exhibited marks enough of his resentment against his secretaries, (sentiments that appear to

have suffered no diminution of force in the lapse of ten years) I have not found one solitary intimation that any dispatches had been kept back.

5. In the last place, I say, that in 1798, I was in fact consulted (I do not mean by Mr. Adams) on the question of declaring war against France; and I gave my opinion explicitly in the negative. Not that I now claim any merit for my opinion; perhaps it was an erroneous one, which some may censure. I relate the simple fact.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

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## LETTER VI.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

MR. ADAMS having never assigned any specific reason for removing me from office, and the conjectures hitherto formed being insufficient to account for it, the question once more recurs—For what reason was I removed?—The answer is not to be expected from Mr. Adams: I am myself constrained to give it.

In the year 1800, Gen. Hamilton published “a letter concerning the public conduct and character of John Adams, Esq. President of the United States.” It had relation to the approaching election of a President. Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson were the rival candidates. In that letter, Gen. Hamilton thus noticed the removal of Mr. M<sup>c</sup>Henry, secretary of war, and of myself from

office: "It happened (said he) at a peculiar juncture, immediately after the unfavourable turn (unfavourable to Mr. Adams) of the (state) election in New York, and had much the air of an explosion of combustible materials which had been long prepared, but which had been kept down by prudential calculations, respecting the effect of an explosion upon the friends of those ministers in the state of New-York. Perhaps, when it was supposed that nothing could be lost in this quarter, and that something might be gained elsewhere, *by an atoning sacrifice of those ministers, especially Mr. Pickering*, who had been for some time particularly odious to the opposition party, it was determined to proceed to extremities." Compare this conjecture of Gen. Hamilton with the following details.

The excessive vanity, and inordinate ambition of Mr. Adams are well known. He wished also to enjoy the emoluments as well as the honour of the Presidency, for at least another term of four years. But by this time he had made such a developement of his character, so inauspicious to a correct administration of the government, as to have excited disgust in many influential federalists. Hence Mr. Adams's fears, that their support alone would not secure his re-election. What course then should he propose to himself? "*Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo.*" Some of the leaders of democracy were sounded. They were, or affected to be, willing to lend their aid, *on conditions*;—of which one was, that *I should be removed from office*. This was assented to; and I was removed, but not without some delay: which furnished at least a pretence to those leaders to disregard the agreement. Not that under existing circumstances they would

have favoured Mr. Adams's election; he was the dupe of their intrigues. By my removal they expected at once to detach from Mr. Adams my particular federal friends, who both for number and respectability were not to be overlooked. And even in the event of Mr. Adams's re-election by a federal majority, the *resentments* of the democrats would be gratified, if their future interests should not be materially promoted by my dismissal.

Such, fellow citizens, was the base, the corrupt motive, for my removal from office. Without recurring to other proofs the simple fact that leading democrats knew, some time before the event, that I was to be dismissed, while federalists were ignorant of it, furnishes the strongest presumptive evidence of the above-mentioned intrigue and cause of my removal.—Another corroborative fact, may be stated, that, but the week before, Mr. Adams told me, that he considered the election of Mr. Jefferson to the Presidency as certain. To detach, therefore, some of his partizans, was essential to his own success.

The first intimation I received of this intrigue, was from the person who gave me the following certificate. Mr. Kimball had been a clerk in the department of state. After quitting the office, he went to Savannah, where he now resides. In 1803 being in Massachusetts, he came to see me, and gave me the information. On his way back to Savannah, in the autumn of that year, he found me at Washington. The fact he had stated to me occurring, I desired him to make out a certificate of it, and to show it to the gentleman from whom he received the information, and who lived in the district of Columbia. For the present, I omit his



name, contenting myself with saying, that he is a gentleman respectable for his standing in society, and of unblemished reputation. It will be seen, too, that Mr. Bowie, whose name will presently appear, confirms the statement in the certificate.

*Mr. Kimball's Certificate.*

"At a public table, M<sup>c</sup>Laughlin's tavern, in George town, July 1800, I heard ——— say, that some time in May preceding, he was present in a public room at Annapolis, when Mr. Smith, the present secretary of the navy, made the following declaration: That we, (meaning the democratic party) have been sent down (from Philadelphia) to know on what terms we would support Mr. Adams at the next presidential election. In our answer among other conditions, was the dismissal of Colonel Pickering from the office of secretary of state: but he has delayed it till he lost all hopes of his election by the strength of his own party; and now we do not thank him for it.

"I have shewn this statement to Mr. ———, who says if it does not contain the precise words of Mr. Smith, that it is substantially correct.

"Mr. ——— further says, that Mr. Smith said, in the same public manner, that he knew Colonel Pickering would be dismissed some time before it took place.

HAZEN KIMBALL.

"*City of Washington, 29th Decr. 1803.*"

Having learnt that Thomas C. Bowie, Esq. of Prince George's county, Maryland, whom I did not personally know, but who was named to me as "a gentleman of high respectability, who had retired from the bar," had a very particular conversation with Robert Smith, (secretary of the navy in 1803,

and now secretary of state) on the subject stated in the above certificate: I took the liberty in April, 1810, of addressing a letter to him with a copy of the certificate. His answer is long, containing many observations not necessary to be introduced here. I will extract what has a special bearing on the case.

*Extracts of a letter dated April 16th, 1810, from Thomas C. Bowie, Esq. to Timothy Pickering.*

“I assure you, sir, it will be a source of much gratification if any thing in my power can contribute, in the smallest degree, to the exposure of those gross and palpable delusions which have been so long imposed upon the American people, by the abettors of democracy, in regard to your public character.” Then noticing my official publications relative to our rulers, and their management of the affairs of the United States, Mr. Bowie says—“In order to impair the effect and universal conviction which they had begun to operate in almost every section of the country, it was soon found necessary to make you the incessant theme of the most bitter invective and vulgar abuse.” “It is impossible for you, sir, to have any adequate idea of the very ungenerous, and I may say wicked expedients resorted to by the democrats in relation to this subject.”

I certainly did hear Mr. Secretary Smith make the declaration contained in the certificate of Mr. Kimball. A few days before the account of your dismissal arrived at Annapolis, I repaired thither, attending the General Court, having just commenced the practice of the law; and having studied in Baltimore with Judge Chase and Mr. Martin I was well acquainted with Mr. Robert Smith,

and the Baltimore Bar generally, with whom I messed in No. 2, at Wharfe's Tavern, although then a resident of Prince George's county. One morning, while in bed, Mr. Smith remarked, that in a few days, the federalists would receive from the seat of government, a piece of intelligence which would both surprise and alarm them. He would not impart what it was, but requested me to *notice* his prediction. When the mail brought the news of your dismissal, Mr. Smith told me it was *that* to which he alluded; and he supposed I would admit he had some knowledge of cabinet secrets.\*—I had understood, a short time previous, that Mr. Adams was negotiating with the leading republican members of the House of Representatives, a coalition which went to secure him 25,000 dollars (a year) at the expence of what he himself had deemed the public good, but a little time before: That General Smith and other leading democratic members, were on the eve of Mr. Adams's expected re-election frequently dining and visiting at his house, and who before that time had never been in the habit of either."

I have now, fellow citizens, unveiled a mystery of iniquity, of which, for near eleven years, very few

\* Mr. Secretary Smith makes so conspicuous a figure in this affair, it may not be amiss to recite one other circumstance recollected by the gentleman referred to in Mr. Kimball's certificate, viz. Mr. Smith having stated that the news looked for from Philadelphia, "was very important, was wholly unexpected, and will greatly surprize *your party*:"—What, says Mr. Bowie, with surprize, are not you one of us? Mr. Smith replied, "that is as it may be." This reply seems to admit of but one meaning, viz. that Mr. R. Smith's openly appearing as a democrat, or retaining the ~~part~~ of federalism, would depend on a political event—*whether Jack or Tom turned up trumps.*

have had any suspicion, and fewer still a knowledge of the facts.—When a man has, at one period of his life, distinguished himself by his public services, it is distressing to find and exhibit him as capable of straying from the straight path of integrity and truth. for it tends to excite suspicions and jealousies towards the most upright and inflexibly just.—This consideration and others before suggested, were sufficient to restrain my pen; and no reasons merely personal, would, in this public manner, have drawn the secret from me. But the apostacy of Mr. Adams, and his open support of men and measures, that were directly opposed to the system of administration which was formed during the Presidency of Washington—which for some time Mr. Adams continued to maintain—but which, in the end he fatally contributed to subvert:—This new course of conduct, in support of a new system of administration, which has overwhelmed our country with calamities before unknown—has demanded the present and still further unfolding of his character. Revenge has no share in it. If that passion had gained an entrance into my breast, it might long since have been gratified. In truth, my resentments were done away. His depravity excited abhorrence, mingled with regret, and his baseness my contempt.

**TIMOTHY PICKERING.**

P. S. My journey homeward, and some unavoidable delays on the way, will cause a suspension of these addresses; but I shall resume the subject as soon as possible after my return to Massachusetts.

## LETTER VII.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

SOME unexpected avocations have prevented so early a continuation of my addresses as I had contemplated. I now resume the consideration of the subjects which I proposed to discuss.—In my second letter, in stating the most prominent, I glanced at the evils with which for some years our country has been afflicted; evils from which you have long been amused with hopes of relief, but which remain unabated; or rather have become more aggravated.—Are they remediless? I trust not: for the remedy is in your own hands. But to apply it with effect you must know their cause. To this also I have adverted; viewing those evils as originating chiefly in the unprincipled ambition of a few men, with Mr. JEFFERSON at their head. It is necessary that you should understand his character, in order rightly to estimate his public measures, into an approbation of which, a great portion of the citizens of the United States have been beguiled.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

When Mr. JEFFERSON entered on the Presidency of the United States, he found them by his own confession, “in the full tide of successful experiment.” And you all know, that while the government was in his hands, this tide of national prosperity abated; and towards the close of his Presidency, and in the two years which have followed under his successor (pursuing the same system) it has fallen to the lowest ebb. Such is the fact.

The principal cause will be found in Mr. JEFFERSON's ill-judged and deceitful policy; in which we are to expect no voluntary change under Mr. MADISON, whose cordial co-operation with his predecessor was a pledge, (Mr. JEFFERSON said) that he would persevere in the same system.

I had contemplated giving a detail, in the order in which they took place of the principal acts, (so far as known to me) of Mr. JEFFERSON's public life; from which might be formed a just estimate of his merit; and from which the sinister policy which has governed him would appear. I shall, however, not confine myself to this course; but anticipate some facts and conclusions, as circumstances may direct.

Mr. JEFFERSON's first claim to distinction seems to have been founded on the *Declaration of Independence*, of which he is reputed to be the writer. So much applause, indeed, has been heaped upon him for his agency in that State Paper, that more merit could hardly have been ascribed to him, if, instead of *writing a declaration on*, he had been the *author* of the *Independence* of the United States. The history of that declaration will show how slender is his claim to distinction for that performance.

The Journals of Congress present to us the following facts:—

On the 7th June, 1776, "certain resolutions respecting Independency" were moved. They were considered the next day; and again on Monday the 10th. The first resolution was in these words: "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British

Crown; and that all political connection between them and the State of *Great Britain* is, and ought to be totally dissolved."—The farther consideration of this resolution was postponed to the first day of July. But that no time might be lost, in case the Congress should then agree to the resolution, it was now resolved that a Committee should be appointed to prepare a *Declaration* to the effect of that first resolution. And on the 11th of June the appointment was made. The members chosen were MR. JEFFERSON, Mr. JOHN ADAMS, Mr. FRANKLIN, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. ROBERT R. LIVINGTON. And Mr. JEFFERSON being the first on the list of the committee, was of course the chairman,—A particular policy governed the choice. In the early period of our revolution, it was deemed expedient, in very important questions, that *Virginia* should take the lead. *Virginia* was then the largest and most populous of the colonies. Perhaps, too, it was expected that her going before would powerfully influence her neighbours to follow in her track. There might be other reasons. Such however, was the fact; as I was once assured by the late Mr. SAMUEL ADAMS (then a member from *Massachusetts*) with a significance of countenance, in making the remark, which distinguished that wily politician. It was then, in pursuance of this policy, when the minds of the members of Congress, generally, were, by the actual state of things, and some previous proceedings, prepared for the Independence of the Colonies, that RICHARD HENRY LEE, of *Virginia*, moved, "the resolutions respecting Independency:" and by the like concert (as I have understood) JOHN ADAMS, of *Massachusetts*, seconded them. Mr. LEE would, almost of course, have been the

chairman of the committee, had not the dangerous sickness of some of his family called him home. In his absence, the choice fell on his colleague, Mr. JEFFERSON.

It may seem too obvious to remark, that, as in ordinary cases, so especially on this great question, the committee met, conferred, and freely communicated their ideas; some of them (as I have been informed) putting their thoughts on paper. Thus furnished with the ideas and views of the members of the committee, Mr. JEFFERSON was charged with preparing a draught of the declaration. And on the 28th of June, the committee reported a draught to Congress. On the 1st of July, it was taken into consideration, in connection with the resolution above recited. July 2d the resolution was agreed to, and the declaration farther considered. On the 3d, Congress continued the consideration of the declaration, and on the 4th of July, agreed to a DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE;—after striking out about one third of the whole, as draughted by Mr. JEFFERSON, and making various amendments, and among others, introducing, with a solemnity demanded by the occasion, their appeal to “the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of their intentions,” and their “firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence.”

I have called the declaration reported by the committee, “Mr. JEFFERSON’s draught,” because I have not learned that any material alterations were made in the committee; and because he so sensibly manifested his disappointment and chagrin at the great alterations made in Congress. In a letter dated July 8, 1776, to an absent delegate, Mr. JEFFERSON says—“I enclose a copy of the



Declaration of Independence as agreed to in the House, (Congress) and also as originally framed. *You will judge whether it is better or worse for the critics.*"—This letter, and the copy of the declaration as "originally framed," inclosed therein, both in the hand writing of Mr. JEFFERSON, I have seen and copied.

Seeing such great alterations in the original draught were thought necessary by Congress, some may ask, how it happened that so respectable a committee should agree to report it?—My answer must be conjectural; that the other members of the committee perceiving the chairman's fondness for his draught, consented to have it reported; relying on the necessary amendments in Congress; and perhaps intending to suggest to some of their friends to move for such as they deemed expedient. Be this, however, as it may, the large alterations and amendments above mentioned were actually made. In fact, the materials of which a Declaration of Independence might be composed, were so abundant, the talent most requisite in the *compiler*, would be that of just discrimination, a correct judgment, to reject minor considerations, and avoid drawing out to too great a length such as were important; in order to present to the world, with dignity and force, that great national act. And when we recollect the number of men eminently distinguished for talents, who were then members of Congress, and know that so large a portion of Mr. JEFFERSON's draught was lopped off, expunged, altered and amended—the conclusion is, that the draught was sufficiently marked with imperfections.—But in the parts retained, what new ideas are to be found? The natural and social rights of man

displayed by eminent English authors, with whose writings the leading men of the day were conversant, and the rights of the Colonists as Englishmen—(and to maintain the latter, violated by the Government of the Parent State, was the sole cause and object of the revolution)—all these rights, I say, and their infringements, had been, for years, the subjects of conversation, of discussion in newspapers and pamphlets, and pre-eminently in the General Congresses of 1774 and 1775; as is manifested in their various resolutions, declarations, and eloquent letters and addresses. So that (as above suggested) the chief task of the compiler of the Declaration of Independence, would consist in making from these ample materials, a judicious and dignified selection.

The celebrated Mr. LOCKE had long before taught his countrymen, in *England* and her Colonies, what were their rights as men, and as subjects: that every just government was founded on the consent of the governed: that when the latter, instead of protection in their rights, experienced oppression from their government, they had a right to resist, to change its form, and introduce a new one. And to the objection, that this principle would produce mischief, as often as a turbulent spirit should desire the alteration of the government—Mr. LOCKE answers—“Till the mischief be grown general, and the ill designs of the rulers become visible, or their attempts sensible to the greater part—the people, who are most disposed to suffer than *right* themselves by resistance, are not apt to stir.”—And Mr. JEFFERSON, in the declaration of independence, copying Mr. LOCKE's principles and ideas, says, in the like case, that “prudence, indeed, will dic-

tate that governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes: and accordingly, all experience has shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to *right* themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed."

Mr. JEFFERSON has never forgotten this idea, of the patient endurance with which a *nation* will submit to oppression, even from a government *not* "long established;" or he would not have ventured on the daring experiment of an unlimited embargo, and other similar oppressive and ruinous measures. But he had also learned with what facility a *nation* might be *deceived*—And so conformable was Mr. JEFFERSON's practice to this idea, it was manifested in so many of his acts, that *Deception* may be considered as the operative principle of his administration.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

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## LETTER VIII.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

IN the political concerns of a nation, excessive admiration of any man leads to dangerous errors: and if that man be not inflexibly just, and beyond the reach of flattery; if, on the contrary, he has but the semblance of virtue, and puts on the garb of patriotism to conceal his ambition; such admiration will produce serious mischiefs.

Whoever reads the history of the Israelites, will

be forcibly struck with their proneness to idolatry, even after their repeated experience of national calamities inflicted by Heaven for that sin. But idolatry is not uncommon among other nations and people. The difference is, that the former worshipped dead idols, the latter living ones.—Mr. JEFFERSON has been the idol of his party; and much incense has been offered to him for virtues he did not possess, and for talents more plausible than solid. His zealous partisans have considered the Declaration of Independence as a work of astonishing excellence, a matchless performance, and all its merits as exclusively his own. The history of that Declaration, in my last address, showed what share he had in it, and the extent of his deservings for that *compilation*.—Many, too, have thought his Notes on the State of *Virginia*, to be a work of great merit, which they have applauded, in the same breath, with the Declaration of Independence. In a word, he has been considered as a profound statesman, a great philosopher, and eminent in science and literature.—It is not within the scope of these addresses, if it were within my competency, to criticise the writings in which Mr. JEFFERSON has attempted to display his philosophy, his science, or his learning. I know, however, that men of acknowledged distinction in all measure his pretensions, in these respects, by a moderate scale.

Mr. JEFFERSON's Notes on *Virginia*, the single work in which he has appeared as an author,—however marked with “imperfections,” as he himself suggests—and abounding in errors, as others say—are, as they relate to the present investigation, most remarkable for containing some correct statements and doctrines, to which, nevertheless, he ap-

plies doubting remarks ; or to which his subsequent official opinions and conduct are in direct opposition. Hereafter I may bring most of them into view. At this time I shall notice only one instance—that relating to commerce.

Great pains have been taken to make the people of the United States, believe that Mr. JEFFERSON was a real friend to commerce. And to give currency to this unfounded opinion, he has himself let slip no occasion to clamour for *the freedom of the seas*, and *the rights of the ocean* ; and the more because that clamour could be pointed against *Great Britain*. For on the seas she has unlimited command ; and because she possesses the power to oppress, he would have it inferred that *Britain* alone interdicts, or *causes* the interdiction of that freedom, and the violation of those rights.

In his Notes, under Query xxii, he says—“ Our interest will be to throw open the doors of commerce, and to knock off all its shackles ; giving perfect freedom to all persons for the vent of whatever they may choose to bring into our ports, and asking the same in theirs.”—What sentiments could be more liberal ? They only happen to be impracticable. But, in the same page, we find the nature and extent of this perfect freedom of commerce—that it should be *active* and *uncontrouled* as to *foreigners*, and *limited* and absolutely *passive* on the part of the citizens of the United States.

After remarking, that if instead of going to war, nations would expend their revenues in making roads, opening canals, building ports, and effecting other internal improvements, “ it would render them much stronger,” (if there were to be no wars, of what use would be *national strength* ?) “ much weal-

thier and happier"\*;—Mr. JEFFERSON adds: "This I hope will be our wisdom. And, perhaps, to remove as much as possible the occasions of making war, *it might be better for us to abandon the ocean altogether*, that being the element whereon we shall be principally exposed to jostle with other nations: *to leave to others to bring what we shall want, and to carry what we can spare.* This would make us invulnerable to *Europe*, by offering none of our property to their prize, *and would turn all our citizens to the cultivation of the earth.*"—" *It might be time enough to seek employment for them at sea, when the land no longer offers it.*"

. In this passage we see the bias of Mr. JEFFERSON'S mind: and though introduced with apparent modesty (by a "perhaps") it undoubtedly expresses the real sentiments of his heart. And here certain of his devoted followers took their lesson of hostility to the *active commerce* of our citizens. In

\* Mr. Jefferson might have added another remark—That if all men were honest, benevolent, and true, we should hear of no injustice, no unkindness, no deception. And then what a delightful world would this be to live in! Every reader will perceive that all such remarks are idle; and when gravely pronounced by a "philosopher," quite ridiculous. Such deep observations are not unfrequent in Mr. Jefferson's writings. But they are not without an object; being calculated to impress the minds of his readers with the belief, that he possessed a feeling heart, alive to every human woe. He knew that benevolence had a charm to conciliate good will and attachment. With great authority, these questions once were asked: "Whence come wars and fightings? Come they not even of your lusts?" The lust for power, for dominion, and for all the objects of avarice and ambition?—Has Mr. Jefferson, since he came on the public stage, witnessed any abatement of these dangerous and mischievous passions? Has he learned to repress his own?

this early opinion of Mr. JEFFERSON we discover one ground of the Terrapin policy (as it has been familiarly called) which, when he found a pretence, he so eagerly adopted; the magnanimous policy of retiring from the ocean, like the turtle within its shell, lest some rude creature should strike at our heads or tread upon our toes. It is the policy which still governs and will continue to govern in the United States, so long as the great mass of the people shall remain under the fatal deception, that the men who had administered their government for the last ten years, are exclusively wise, honest and patriotic.—But such extreme credulity, such easy confidence, such ready submission, has surpassed the ideas Mr. JEFFERSON entertained at the time when he wrote his Notes on *Virginia*. He did not then conceive it possible that the same people who had commenced their opposition to the government of the Parent State, more to resist a dangerous principle than evils actually inflicted, would patiently submit, not merely to the violation of principle, but to positive oppression. One of the complaints against the King of *Great Britain*, and one of the grounds of the Declaration of Independence, was, his giving assent to “an act for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world.” But Mr. JEFFERSON not only assented to but was the father of such an act—the EMBARGO, imposed by his recommendation and influence, unlimited in its form, and calculated to endure until the foreign commerce of the United States would be annihilated. It was in fact continued as long as his successor thought your patience would endure it. To this ruinous measure Mr. JEFFERSON was so wedded (his special motives may hereafter be un-

folded—) that in July, 1808, when the evils of the Embargo had become apparent to every eye not blinded by prejudice or deceit; and it was observed to him, “that the injuries to the United States would be greater than those of any other government”—he answered—“They were mistaken in their calculation; and that *he would rather see America sunk, than make any alterations in what had been done by this government, until Great Britain would repeal her Orders in Council.*” If those orders had been the cause of the Embargo, there would have been some colour for its continuance until they should be repealed: but I have formally shown, on the floor of the Senate, and in the course of these addresses I will more fully show, that Mr. JEFFERSON's Embargo was imposed without any relation to the orders in council, whose existence even was not known to him when he recommended that measure. The above recited declaration of Mr. JEFFERSON, that he would rather see *America sunk* than change his system, was repeated to Mr. HILLHOUSE and me by a gentleman of reputation, to us, well known, who was present at the conversation, and on the same day noted down those extraordinary words.

In my next number the subject of commerce will be continued.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.



## LETTER IX.

\* FELLOW CITIZENS,

IN my last address, I remarked, that Mr. Jefferson, when he wrote his Notes on Virginia, did not imagine the people's faith and patience would carry them so far as to sacrifice to the will of their rulers such obvious and important interests as their commerce and navigation, and continue their admiration of their destroyers. Nobody, indeed, could have believed it possible. The fact alone could render it credible.

After manifesting his own opinion, that it would be our wisdom "to abandon the ocean altogether;" Mr. Jefferson adds, "But the actual habits of our countrymen attach them to commerce. They WILL exercise it for themselves." Yet at the close of the year 1807, he had acquired the confidence of the mass of the nation to such a degree that he ventured on the experiment "of abandoning the ocean," under the *disguise* of an EMBARGO; a name familiar for a *temporary* suspension of commercial navigation, for some *definite* and *temporary* cause and object. But the act imposing the Embargo was without limitation, and without an adequate cause or object. The reasons he assigned to Congress were so flimsy, the documents he communicated so insufficient, that if the effect of overweening confidence, and the force of party were not known, it would seem impossible that Congress should have sanctioned the measure. As the people, however, suffering the loss of trade, might be less tractable than Congress, it was

deemed necessary to wrap up the project in mystery. Hence it was, that part of the documents were withdrawn and returned to Mr. Jefferson, as he had requested; and kept secret until the country was completely saddled with the Embargo, and in effect to this day. For though at length they were again communicated and published, yet it was with a mass of other papers, and without any indication that they had been originally offered (what no one not in the secret would suspect) as part of the grounds for the Embargo. These two papers I shall publish, when I come to investigate the *real motives* of Mr. Jefferson in recommending that measure.

Mr. Jefferson, having stated that the habits of the people of the United States attach them to commerce, and they *will* exercise it for themselves, draws this inference—"War, then must sometimes be our lot."—This led him to broach his opinion on the most suitable preparations for war. And he says that whether we provide for offence or DEFENCE, "the sea is the field on which we should meet an European enemy. On that element it is necessary we should possess some power." He then offers his reasons why a small naval force is sufficient for us; and adds, that "a small one is necessary." The result of his calculations of one year's possible exertions, in raising money to form a navy, would be eighteen ships of the line, and twelve frigates; but without deciding whether more or less than a year's exertion should be so applied.

Here we see Mr. Jefferson's deliberate opinion of the place where the United States ought to meet a European enemy, and of the fittest instru-

ments of warfare, whether for offence or DEFENCE. Now mark his practice, when he had reached the summit of power in the Union. Instead of effective ships of the line and frigates, capable of "meeting a European enemy on the sea," he recommends the building of squadrons of GUN-BOATS only; which could *not* meet a European or any other enemy on the sea. Yes, he expressly states, "that this species of naval armament is proposed merely for *defensive* operation; that it can have but little effect towards protecting our commerce in the open sea, even on our own coast; and still less can it become an excitement to engage in offensive maritime war, towards which it would furnish no means."

Thus the gun-boat system perfectly coincides with Mr. Jefferson's notion of "abandoning the ocean altogether"—of renouncing all commerce (or at least all commercial navigation:) for gun-boats, he says, "can have but little effect towards protecting it in the open sea, even on our coast." But he subjoins one consolation, *that gun-boats will not tempt us to engage in offensive maritime war*. This reason is of the same kind with that offered to Congress, in his first message (Dec. 8, 1801) for desiring an *empty treasury*: for a full treasury, *revenues accumulated*, might offer temptations to make war. This he suggested as a motive for the repeal (which he had just proposed) of all the internal taxes. For when a person has a favourite project in view, he seizes eagerly on every circumstance which may promote, justify or excuse its execution. That anticipated repeal of the taxes had been diligently used as a means of gaining popularity; and Mr. Jefferson was determined to secure what he had gained.

This policy of Mr. Jefferson of guarding against an abundant treasury, operated to a charm. His mischievous measures left the treasury empty; and worse than empty: for in the first year of Mr. Madison's presidency, it was found necessary to provide by law for the borrowing of some millions of dollars to defray "the public expences;" and in the next for borrowing some millions more!

But although in political questions, affecting the general views and interests of the party, Mr. Jefferson was sure of support; yet in other cases he experienced occasional opposition. Some of his projects were too preposterous, or impracticable, to be maintained by his friend.—And although he succeeded in getting his gun-boats built; yet as soon as he ceased to be president, *they went out of fashion*. It was discovered that this favorite scheme for general defence was defective and contemptible, if not impracticable.\* And in the first session of Congress under his predecessor, (June, 1809) a committee of the Senate reported a bill for selling the gunboats, with the reservation of a small number for particular situations. If the bill had become a law, and they had been sold, it is possible they might have fetched a tenth part of what they had cost the United States, in the last years of Mr. Jefferson's presidency. In this gun-boat project we see one display of that gentleman's wisdom and ECONOMY. But the bill miscarried; and the cause

\* In the Senate, on a question for putting some of the frigates in commission for service, Gen. Smith advocated the measure, partly on this ground, "*That seamen would not enlist to serve in the gun-boats: but when enlisted for the frigate they might be transferred from them to the gun-boats!*" On this kidnapping idea sea-faring men will be the best commentators.

of its failure seemed to be this. As soon as it was known abroad that the gun-boat system was no longer favoured by the administration—if it was not even a subject of derision with one or more of its members, as well as in Congress;—and that a committee of the Senate had reported a bill for selling “this species of naval armament;”—the editors of newspapers renewed their attack upon them with upbraiding ridicule. The pride of the government was touched; perhaps Mr. Jefferson had interfered; or some of his friends for him to save his feelings. Be this as it may, the bill was postponed; and the gun-boats remain unsold; although excepting twenty-four at New Orleans, they were absolutely useless, were rapidly decaying, and were soon to become of no value. For the Secretary of the Navy reported (and the report was laid before the Senate with the bill to authorize the sale) that “if a gun-boat is suffered to lie in port for one year without giving her any kind of repair, she will probably be found at the end of that year wholly unworthy of being repaired.”—I take it for granted, that (with the exception of the few at New Orleans) the gun-boats were not repaired within that year, nor since; and of consequence that they are now worthless.

In the same report, the Secretary of the Navy gave his “Estimate of the *annual* expense of taking care of the gun-boats laid up” (and all but those at New Orleans were laid up) amounting to fifty-four thousand seven hundred and nine dollars: excluding ten thousand dollars from the estimate for *annual* repairs: because I presume no repairs of those “laid up” have been made.—Thus have one million and some hundred thousands of dollars been sacrificed to Mr. Jefferson’s *views* and *whims*. And

even the little saving which might have been made two years ago, has been prevented by a tenderness for his reputation, or the pride of those who co-operated with him in the original project.

But there is more **ECONOMY** in this business yet to be displayed. In another report, made three days after the former, the Secretary of the Navy states the comparative expences of building gun-boats and frigates: by which it appears, that the former would cost gun for gun, more than twice as much as the latter.—For instance, that a frigate mounting 56 guns (42 pound carronades and 24 pound long cannon) would cost 221,000 dollars; and 19 gun boats carrying each two guns, 228,000 dollars; and that the building of 25 gun-boats, carrying each one gun, would cost 22,500 dollars; That to fight 56 guns on board of 28 gun-boats, would require 1215 men: and to fight 56 guns in 56 gun-boats would require 2520 men: and that these 2520 men on board frigates, each mounting 56 guns, and each requiring 420 men, can fight 336 guns consisting of 42 pound carronades and 24 pound long cannon—[that is, the 2520 men would man and fight six frigates of 56 guns each.] He concludes his comparison with this farther statement; “that the difference between the annual expense of fighting fifty-six guns on board a frigate, and 28 gun-boats carrying 56 guns (two to each boat) is 206,550 dollars, and that the difference in the annual expence of fighting 56 guns on board a frigate, and 56 gun-boats carrying each one gun, is 535,200 dollars. That is above half a million of dollars *more*, for 56 gun-boats carrying each one gun kept in service one year, than it would to maintain a frigate for the same time, carrying the same number of guns!—Who now will call in question the wisdom and **ECONOMY** of Mr.

Jefferson's plans?—But the gun-boats might, “if properly stationed,” that is, in the smooth water of land-locked harbours, afford some aid in defending such ports; they could not protect our commerce in the open sea, even on our own coast: ships of the line and frigates could do both: *and gun-boats had the preference!* \*

\* There is one fact connected with the gun-boat business which is little known; and as it was intended to form a part of that system of defence, it may not be uninteresting.

There is, near the entrance of the Chesapeake Bay, a space of some miles in extent called the Middle Ground, where the water is of sufficient depth for gun-boats, but too shallow for ships of war. Mr. Jefferson's project was to form, on some part of this shoal an *Asylum* for his favorite “species of naval armament.” This was to be accomplished by encompassing a part of the shoal with mounds of rocks, to be transported and thrown in until their ridges should rise fairly above water. On these ridges (I do not know whether in the form of a square or a circle) were to be raised walls of masonry, I think twelve feet high, and of a thickness (I suppose) sufficient to resist the battering of cannon, as well as of the sea. By an opening left in one of the sides, the gun boats were to enter. And this opening was to be guarded by so running the two parts of this side, that they might over-lap, leaving a space between for the gun-boats to pass in and out.—With this most ingenious project, Mr. Jefferson was so delighted, that, embracing in his glowing imagination the time of its execution, he exclaimed with transport,—“Then let a British ship of war show her nose if she dare!”

It may occur to some to ask, why this Wet Dock (as well as the Dry Dock) was not proposed to Congress. Unfortunately—or fortunately—Mr. Jefferson happened to meet with a man of common sense and experience—a *practical* philosopher—to whom the scheme was communicated. This gentleman, in the first place, endeavoured (though in vain) to convince Mr. Jefferson that the proposed foundation of this wall would not resist the rolling of the Atlantic waves. But when he told him that the sand of the Middle Ground occasionally shifted; and that if his mounds of rocks resisted the force of the sea, they would cause an island to be formed; and

This plan of gun-boats instead of ships of the line and frigates, is perfectly consistent with, and a confirmation of the opinion extensively entertained—That Mr. Jefferson and his chief supporters are not *friends*, if they are not *enemies* to the foreign commerce of the United States, as connected with their navigation; and that they are alike enemies to an efficient navy. Of these things I am sensible that many of my fellow citizens will need no new evidence. For the information of others—instead of more details, at this time—I subjoin the open avowal of a distinguished member of Congress from Virginia, during the last session. It furnishes the key to open to us the plan of the administration, and its prime or confidential supporters; and will aid us in accounting for their conduct in relation to foreign powers, to France in particular.

As Mr. Eppes (Mr. Jefferson's-son-in-law) in the last session of Congress, said of the Bank of the United States, that its fate was to be decided on party principles; so his colleague spoke of our government itself;—That “it was a government of party: that they were obliged to have recourse to such measures *as would enable them to retain their places*: that they never would go to war for the rights of the ocean: commerce never would be protected by force; not even if there was a blockading fleet at the mouth of each of our

that the entrance into his dock (or pound) would be choked up—Mr. Jefferson gave way; and the project was abandoned.

The first intimation of this project was given to me by a friend of Mr. Jefferson, who heard him utter *the stout defiance to the British navy*; and the details of it by a gentleman with whom Mr. Jefferson conferred on the subject, and who made the objections above stated.



harbours: And Government [the party now in power and administering the Government] never would risk a war until our resources were sufficient to defray the expenses *without creating burthens to make them unpopular.*"

This avowal was made to another member of Congress, who at my request, while the declaration was fresh in his memory, committed it to writing.—I have not now room for comments upon it—besides it speaks a language too plain to require any.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

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## LETTER X.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

I CLOSED my last address with the plain avowal, by a distinguished member of Congress from Virginia, during the last session, of the real policy of our government in the management of the affairs of the nation. I present it again at the head of this address; for it well deserves a second reading. It is a text on which many interesting comments may be made—He said, "That our government was a government of party: that they were obliged to have recourse to such measures *as would enable them to retain their places*: that they never would go to war for the rights of the ocean: commerce never would be protected by force; not even if there was a blockading fleet at the mouth of each of our harbours; And Go-

vernment (meaning the party now in power and administering the Government) never would risk a war until our resources were sufficient to defray the expenses, *without creating burthens to render them unpopular.*"

In my first address, I said you had suffered many wrongs (during the administrations of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison) "not for *your* ultimate advantage, but that your LEADERS, PRETENDED PATRIOTS, *might obtain and hold power and place and the emoluments of office.*" In the above voluntary confession of the Virginian delegate you have direct evidence of the fact.—That such was the *governing principle* of the men now in power, has long been manifest to a large portion of my fellow citizens: but the majority, deceived by *plausible professions* of zeal for the public welfare, have placed their entire confidence in these men; until at length, presuming the deception complete, they have the boldness to avow their plan of governing, and their motives.

I pray every citizen, and especially every merchant, every ship builder and other mechanic, whose business is connected with navigation and commerce, together with all sea-faring men, seriously to consider this declaration of the plan and the motives on which the government is administered. In them they will see their miserable doom; and the cause of the degraded and suffering condition of our country. Our rulers have not taken, nor will take, the measures necessary to save the country; lest the means, to which recourse must be had to carry those measures into execution, should render them unpopular! And thus the interests and employments of multitudes who live

by commerce and navigation, are to continue to be sacrificed to the selfish views of that small band of men who have gotten into their hands the reins of government; and the great interests and the honour of the NATION must be slighted or abandoned, lest these *patriots* should lose their places! like spaniels they submit to be spurned and kicked by the French Emperor, who tells them they are “without just political views, without honor, without energy!” And after a series of such insults, which no nation not at open war ever before offered to another; and after piracies and robberies (under the names of captures and sequestrations) immense in number and value, the Emperor adds one insult keener and more bitter than all the rest: that “his majesty loves the Americans!”

If, fellow citizens, any one of you had associated with a man who had called himself your friend—whom you had taken infinite pains to benefit and to please—should rob you on the highway, pick your pocket, spit in your face, call you a blockhead, without honour and without spirit; and after all should look you in the face, and say “he loved you!” I do not ask what you would *think*; but what would be your *feeling*? Would you not hurl defiance at the aggressor, and avenge your wrongs?—The individual case supposed is but an imperfect representation of the insults and injuries received by our government and citizens from the Emperor of France. And yet our rulers, to whom the people have confided their interests, and to whom they look for direction—far from resenting, and demanding satisfaction—dare not even express the ordinary feelings of men at these unexampled outrages!--If sometimes

a faint murmur of complaint escapes, and they direct their minister at Paris to say, that the "public" feelings have been excited by the language and conduct of the French government towards the United States, yet it is with extreme caution, lest his imperial majesty should be offended. For the direct meditated insult in the letter of the French minister Champagny, of January 15, 1808,\* our government, instead of *demanding reparation*, sought only for an *explanation*. And lest language too bold for the tender and delicate susceptibility of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, in relation to France should be used by the American minister, Gen. Armstrong—he is instructed, in presenting the President's gentle complaint, "to take care whilst he should make the French government sensible of the offensive tone employed, [in Champagny's letter] to leave the way open for friendly and respectful explanations, if there should be a

\* In Mr. Madison's own statement of this insult [letter to Gen. Armstrong, May 2, 1808] he says—"it presented to the United States the alternative of bending to the views of France against her enemy, or of incurring a confiscation of all the property of their citizens carried into the French prize courts; and implied that they [the United States] were susceptible of impressions by which no independant and honourable nation can be guided." And Great-Britain in retaliation for Napoleon's Berlin decree of November, 1806, having issued the Orders in Council of November, 1807, the French Emperor undertakes to say "that war exists between the United States and England"—"and his majesty considers it as declared from the day on which England published her decrees." Thus to "prejudge and pronounce for the United States the effect which the conduct of another nation ought to have on their councils and course of proceeding (Mr. Madison, with all becoming meanness ventures to say) had the air at least of assumed authority, not less irritating to the public feelings."

disposition to offer them!" Gen. Armstrong scrupulously obeyed his instructions. In his letter to the French Minister he says—"His excellency will be persuaded that the President, in directing this representation, *had no object in view beyond that of seeking an explanation*, which cannot but tend to promote the harmony of the two powers." But no explanation was given. The words were too plain to need it. The insult was intended.—The French Emperor had long before ascertained the characters of the men to whom the insult was specially addressed; and he disdained to answer such miserable suppliants. He had long considered, and at length openly pronounced them to be, "without just political views, without honour, without energy." And what independent American, taking a correct view of the conduct of the administrations of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, especially for the last four years—but stung with equal shame and regret for his fallen country, humbled and debased by their system of government—can avoid admitting the reproach of the Emperor, horribly insulting as it is, to be just?

From this picture of our degraded country, I turn to take a glance at its features at a former memorable period.

Had the United States not known France until within the last four years; if the perfidy, rapacity, and injustice of her government had not been experienced; a long forbearance on the part of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison might have been excusable. But on this head those gentlemen had nothing to learn. They both perfectly understood the character of the French government. From the issuing of the Berlin and Milan decrees to this

day, the conduct of the French Emperor (to say nothing of his atrocities committed all over continental Europe) has been a repetition, but with aggravations, of the outrages of the Directory, when France called herself a republic. The open violation of her solemn treaties with the United States has been the same; and the same her contempt for the law of nations. The principles of robbers and pirates and tyrants have directed the measures of the government as well of republican as of imperial France.

Under the preceding administrations of the American government, while France appeared under the form of a republic, the state of things called for a patient endurance of many wrongs. The proceedings of her government were so extraordinary as to induce an opinion that they must have arisen from strange prejudices, misinformation, or misrepresentation, relative to the conduct of the government of the United States. A hope therefore was entertained, that when the truth of facts should be fairly and fully exhibited to the French government, it would be satisfied; and regulate its measures towards the United States, by the stipulations of treaties, the rules of public law, and the duties of friendship, which, on the part of the United States, was sincere and cordial to France.—The Presidents Washington and Adams sent one embassy after another, to the French government, to explain every act of the American government of which that of France complained—to give and to ask reparation for injuries, which could be supported by proof—and earnestly to seek a reconciliation. But all these attempts of the American government to settle every point of difference by

negociation, were fruitless. Our ministers were rejected, rudely and ignominiously rejected; and among other unwarrantable demands, the Directory and their minister Talleyrand required a loan of money to a vast amount, besides a *douceur*, in plain English a *bribe*, of fifty thousand pounds sterling—(upwards of two hundred thousand dollars)—for their own pockets, as a preliminary to induce them to open their ears to hear our respectful representations! This shameless demand, and other unwarrantable requisitions, were refused, and our ministers returned.

These proceedings of the French government, and the vast depredations on our commerce, committed by virtue of its unjust and outrageous decrees, had demonstrated that the complaints and claims of the French government had been advanced, not to obtain a restoration of violated rights (for we had violated none) but as a pretence for trampling on ours.

The United States had then to choose between absolute submission to the views and will of the French government—or, roused by its insults and injuries, to resist its oppression. Happily there was at that time no disposition in the American government to conceal the enormities of France, or to check and palsy the rising spirit of our citizens. The voice was general—"Millions for defence, not a cent for tribute." The government determined to resist—prepared for war—armed public and private vessels to protect and defend commerce—and repel French aggressions.

As soon as the French government found its mistake—that with all our friendship for France, there was then too much independence of spirit to submit

to unlimited depredations on our commerce, and insults on the national honour. When France found her party in the United States, of whose strength she had boasted, was overborne (for to our eternal disgrace France had then, as she now has, a devoted party in the bosom of our country)—When she saw numerous vessels armed and sent to sea to protect our commerce, and her own public as well as private armed ships captured, and brought into our ports; then the French government, abandoning its unfounded and arrogant demands, came forward and professed its desire of peace and reconciliation.

The same course, if Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison—feeling as the chiefs of a nation ought to feel for its just rights, honour, and independence, most atrociously violated by the present ruler of France; if with the integrity and spirit becoming their station they had adopted the same course; it would have produced the like effect. Or if it failed: if the arrogance of the single despot who now governs France, as much surpasses the pride of the five tyrants called the Directory, as his means and his power exceed theirs, and had prevented any relenting on the part of the French Emperor: if true to his declaration “that there should be no neutrals,” or in the words recited by Gen. Armstrong, “that the United States should be compelled to take the positive character of allies or enemies:” then war, open war would have taken place: and in this case also, we should have escaped a repetition of insults; and our commerce would have been comparatively safe. The millions which for years have been expended in keeping up the remnant of our navy, to no useful purpose, would have greatly contributed to protect our commerce; and the very many mil-



lions which our merchants, misled by the measures of our government, have suffered to rush into the very jaws of the tiger—or been compelled to send unarmed and undefended, within the reach of his claws—would have been preserved.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

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## LETTER XI.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

THE *Text* furnished by the Virginian delegate to Congress, which was recited in the two preceding numbers, requires some further comments.

As a consequence necessarily resulting from that gentleman's declaration, I remarked, that besides the essential interests of numerous portions of our citizens more immediately concerned, sacrificed to the views of party leaders, the great interests and the honour of our country must be slighted or abandoned, lest those gentlemen should lose their places, the power and the emoluments of office. But I may be asked, what hazard to their popularity would arise from their taking those measures which the public welfare, the honour and safety of the nation, imperiously require? I answer, that as the great body of the people, the nation, must necessarily desire that the national interests, honour and safety may be promoted and secured; of course they will approve the measures which they *believe* are calculated to effect those great and patriotic purposes. But if the nation have been *deceived*;

if they have been taught to believe, and do believe, that the measures which alone can maintain and secure those essential objects, would be most injurious and destructive; if to the men whom the people have long "delighted to honour," may be applied the denunciation of the prophet—"Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter;" then what will the people approve? The pernicious measures of their deceiving leaders.—Even in the days of WASHINGTON they alarmed the fears of the people, that the system of administration which he approved was *calculated* to introduce monarchy and nobility, from which, by the revolution, they had recently been freed.—Mr. Jefferson, in his memorable letter to his friend Mazzei, dared to represent "the Executive Power," meaning WASHINGTON, in whom, as President, the executive power was then vested,—“the Judiciary,” and “all the Officers of Government,” as engaged in a conspiracy against republicanism! “Instead (says he) of that noble love of liberty and of that republican government which carried us triumphantly through the dangers of the war, an English-monarchical-aristocratical party has risen up, whose avowed object is to impose on us the *substance*, as they have already given us the *form*, of the British government”—by this “form of the British government,” meaning *the Constitution of the United States*, which he and his partisans *now* profess so much to admire. The people were taught to hate every thing pertaining to England, and to love every thing pertaining to France: That the chief magistrate of

England being a *king*, must therefore be a *tyrant* ruling over *slaves* : While France, calling herself a *republic*, must be *free*, and her rulers the patriotic guardians of the people's rights. No connection, therefore, no treaty, not even of amity and *commerce*, for *our own benefit and for the settlement of old disputes*, must be formed with England, lest the purity of republicanism should be defiled by her "whoredoms." In the same letter to Mazzei, above mentioned, Mr. Jefferson represented many of the most distinguished citizens of the United States as having become apostates from republicanism—"men (he says) who were Solomons in counsel and Samsons in combat, but whose hair had been cut off by the whore England." Meaning that England had *corrupted* them, and so prevented the exertion of their former wisdom, virtue and energy in administering the government\*.—There is no room to doubt that Mr. Jefferson comprehended WASHINGTON in this audacious reproach. *Before* the publication of this letter in the United States [it was first published by Mr. Jefferson's French friends in Paris] Mr. Jefferson seldom, if ever, passed Mount Vernon without calling, or sending an apology for omitting it : but *after* its publication these civilities entirely ceased. A visit then, he was sensible, would have been an insult not to be borne.

But what was the *tyranny* under which the Britons groaned, and for submission to which Americans were taught to think and call them *slaves* !

\* This letter to Mazzei was probably written in 1794, soon after Mr. Jefferson quitted the department of State, "to avoid figuring in scenes" which he could not control, and turn to the service of France, and his own elevation to the Presidency, so well as in his *philosophic* retirement of Monticello.

These *slaves* asserted and maintained the very *liberties* for which the sages and heroes of our revolution counselled, struggled, bled, and died: they contended for their “birth rights”—the “rights of Englishmen,” in which we and our fathers always placed our glory\*, the right by their representatives to participate in the making of their laws—and of giving and granting their own money for the public service; the right of trial by Jury before able and independent judges; the right to the writ of *Habeas Corpus*, which every Englishman may demand, and by virtue of which he is secured, as we are by the same process, against lawful arrests and imprisonments by ministers, military officers, or others who abuse their power; and with these rights they enjoy freedom of speech and of the press. In one word, of all the countries on the earth, the United States and the British Dominions alone are free. The rights of Englishmen our fathers brought hither with them from England; and to that country *WE* are indebted for all our practical ideas of freedom. And yet *that* is the country—now the world’s last hope—on whose existence and independent power our own depend—as intelligent and reflecting democrats themselves well know, and some of them acknowledge, but whose down-

\* The first Congress which was assembled at New York in 1794, unanimously resolved, “That our ancestors, who first settled these Colonies, were, at the time of their emigration from the mother country, entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free, and natural born subjects within the realm of England. That by such emigration they by no means forfeited surrendered, or lost any of those rights.” They also resolved “That the foundation of *English Liberty* and of all *free Government*, is, a right in the People to participate in their legislative Council.”

fal and subjugation to France many of their brethren appear heartily to desire.

And what are the blessings of Frenchmen, which seem so attractive in the eyes of many of our citizens? They are such as these: To be dragged in chains to the armies, that they may have the honour to endure all the miseries of war, to fight and to die *not* for their COUNTRY, but for the boundless ambition of an unfeeling tyrant, to be wretched themselves, and the instruments to bring down misery and ruin on all the nations round: to be taxed at his pleasure; and if they delay payment, to have soldiers quartered upon them, eating up their substance until they can find the means of payment: to have their commerce destroyed, and be deprived of all its comforts: to be beset by spies employed by the Emperor to watch their words and actions; so that before a Frenchman dare open his mouth on any public affairs, or any thing relating to the Emperour, he looks round to see if any suspicious person be present. And there he is often deceived. For since the French revolution, such has been the increased and general prostration of morals, such scope and encouragement have been given to vices and crimes, that not unfrequently the father betrays the son, and the son the father; and "a man's enemies are those of his own house." In a word, the will of the imperial tyrant is law; and the most grievous oppressions are inflicted on the people. His decrees in hostility to commerce; have spread devastation in the trading towns and cities of France. Bordeaux, for instance, once so active and flourishing, with a population of upwards of a hundred thousand persons has by the loss of its trade lost half of its

inhabitants.—The like destruction and misery have visited Holland, which had grown and existed by commerce, and all other countries where the French Emperour's sway is established.—Amidst these mighty ruins spread over the nations of Europe, appears Napoleon's court, in pomp, in splendour, in luxury, surpassing all example, and which the many millions plundered from the citizens of the United States have contributed to support: plunderings which no efficient means have been used by our own government to repress; and the restoration, or indemnity for which have been but faintly asked.

And how is this subserviency, this tameness, this servility towards France to be accounted for? In my second address I alluded to the general cause. That as Mr. Jefferson and his fellow labourers rose to power by inflaming the love of the people to France, and their hatred to England, they have also thought it necessary to keep alive these passions, as the surest means for the continuance of their power. They represented the impartial system of Washington's administration as a "system of ingratitude and injustice towards France, from which they would alienate the people of the United States, to bring them under British influence."—These are Mr. Jefferson's words in his letter to Mazzei. And as the cry of ingratitude to France, and of British influence was well adapted to promote his ambitious views, its origin may well be ascribed to him. It corresponds with the slanders against Washington and Adams for which he afterwards paid his friend and correspondent the infamous James Thompson Callender. With similar views his partisans kept up the cry to this day.

Having thus led the body of the people into fatal errors respecting the two great nations at war, and the character and views of the citizens who before administered the government, they dare not undeceive them. They cannot now tell the people the TRUTH, without justifying the sentiments and policy of their political opponents, the followers of WASHINGTON, and thus hazarding the loss of their offices and power: and their measures, for the last four years especially, are in evidence that they would rather sacrifice the rights, interests and honour of our country, and put in jeopardy its liberty and independence.

Another means employed to undermine the federal administration was, the raising a clamour against the taxes which were indispensable for the support of the public faith in regard to the debts incurred by the revolutionary war—for carrying on, during several years, an expensive war against the Indians, for the defence and protection of the frontiers—and for providing the means of protecting our commerce and our country against the aggressions and hostile views of France.

Although no government can exist without revenue—and no revenue be attainable without taxes—yet no person of any experience can be ignorant, that the levying of taxes is one of the most ungracious acts of a government. It has therefore been the policy of most governments to raise a great (often the greatest) portion of their revenues by *indirect* taxes; especially on the articles imported from foreign countries, which are first paid by the merchant importers, and then

by them added to and blended with the prices of the articles imported; so that the people at large who use and consume them, cannot distinguish the taxes from the prices of the articles themselves; and being thus paid insensibly, they occasion no murmurs or discontent; and the less, because as to many articles which are more of luxury or convenience than necessity, they may be purchased or not at the pleasure of every citizen. —But when a government lays *direct* taxes, for example, a certain sum<sup>is</sup> on every man's head (thence called a *poll* or *capitation* tax) or certain sums on his house, his land, his horses and cattle —he knows precisely the amount of his taxes; and if these be heavy, discontent is not an unusual consequence. Yet sometimes necessary wars (such as that of the American revolution) and defensive wars in general are of such extent and long continuance, as require large revenues, and proportionably by taxes. Now if the whole of the taxes in such cases were imposed upon goods imported from other countries, great portions of them could never be collected: the temptation to run or smuggle the goods into the country, and thus evade the taxes altogether, would be so great, as with many to be irresistible. If, for instance, a tax (more commonly called a *duty*) on any imported article, be twenty-five per cent (or one fourth) of its value; and it may be brought on shore and concealed from the collectors, at a risk not exceeding ten or fifteen per cent.—the probability is, that large portions of all such goods will be smuggled in, without paying any duties at all. The only remedy in this case is, to lower the duties on such articles, so as to approach in their



amount, to the value of the risk of smuggling them. For then the merchant will rather pay the duties than hazard his reputation as well as his goods, for the small gain which might be made by smuggling. It is a well known fact, that in Great Britain, where frequent wars have demanded immense revenues, that the duties on some goods imported were so high as to occasion very extensive smuggling, to the serious loss of revenue. And the government by lowering the duties actually collected more money.

I have gone into this detail to give some idea of the powerful reasons which induced Washington's administration, at a time when our revenues from commerce were comparatively small, and the public expenditures unavoidably great, to raise a part of the necessary revenues by other taxes than those on goods imported: lest the increasing of the latter to the extent of the public want should put in jeopardy the whole system, by temptation it would have given to smuggling. And that this policy was correct, is demonstrated by its effects: for probably in no country in the world were the duties on goods imported so universally and honourably paid as in the United States. The system fairly established, and the habit of regular paying once fixed, the same duties admitted of a gradual and moderate increase. And had the same system been continued; had not Mr. Jefferson, with other views than to save the persons and property of the people, caused the embargo to be imposed, that honourable payment of duties would have been continued. But his total prohibition of trade, by which hundreds of thousands of our citizens gained a livelihood, being long continued (for a temporary em-

bargo would not have answered the purposes of Bonaparte, in forming his system to destroy the commerce and the power of Great Britain) produced such general distress as to be no longer tolerable. The embargo laws were broke, the practice of smuggling introduced, and the morals of the people corrupted. Indeed if WASHINGTON could rise from the dead, and devote another forty-five years to the service of his country, and administer the government with his unsullied purity and patriotism—he could not repair the waste of virtue, and banish the corruption of morals, introduced in Mr. Jefferson's ten years' administration.

But to return. When Mr. Jefferson had paved the way for his ascending to the Presidency, by various arts, among others by encouraging or countenancing the popular discontents respecting taxes;\* one of his first acts as President was, so fulfil the expectation—generally and industriously excited to increase his popularity—of a repeal of the internal taxes, which he accordingly recommended and effected.—Fortunately for him, he entered on the Presidency at a time when the United States were in the enjoyment of peace, and when they were (as he himself said) “in the full tide of successful experiment, under the government which had so far kept us free and firm,” and when our “Agriculture, Manufactures, COMMERCE and NAVIGA-

\* In his letter of Oct. 6, 1799, to Callender, Mr. Jefferson says, “I thank you for the proof sheets [of the ‘Prospect before Us’ containing the infamous slanders on Washington and Adams] you inclosed to me. Such papers cannot fail to produce the best effect. They inform the thinking part of the nation; and these again supported by the *tax gatherers* as their vouchers set the people to rights.”

TION, the four pillars of our prosperity," \* were in the most flourishing condition; and, when our revenues rapidly increasing, rendered practicable a diminution of the taxes. But whether such a *total* repeal was correct—whether sound policy, in reference to future contingencies of war or essential reductions of commerce, did not require discrimination and reserve, Mr. Jefferson did not consider; or if he did, every thing was made to yield to his personal views at the moment.

The very prosperous state of our commerce and navigation, when Mr. Jefferson became President, *while it was left unshackled by our own government*, justified, perhaps suggested his remark, "that they were then most thriving when left most free to individual enterprize." \* Bonaparte had a little before entered on his political career as First Consul of the French Republic; and commerce was still allowed to "thrive." It was not till November, 1806, after he had overturned the Prussian monarchy, that he formed his "Continental system," for restricting commerce or annihilating it, directly for the purpose of crippling or destroying the commerce of Great Britain, which he considered as the vital principle of her power. To render this system effectual, he said, "its execution ~~must~~ be complete."—"The principal powers of Europe had adopted it." The concurrence of the United States (whose commerce then surpassed that of any other nation, that of Great Britain excepted) was necessary to render the execution of Bonaparte's system complete. And within less than three months afterwards, and in four days after the arrival of dis-

† Mr. Jefferson's first message to Congress, Dec. 8, 1801.

patches at Washington, by Mr. Jefferson's special messenger from Paris, his embargo was recommended to Congress, and the bill for imposing it passed the Senate on the same day.

The unpopularity of the internal taxes (however necessary and prudent in their establishment) we have seen that Mr. Jefferson well understood. Yet the direct tax on houses, lands, &c. originated, if I mistake not, with Mr. Jefferson's own party; and I believe Mr. Madison (then in the House of Representatives) reported a resolution for the direct tax. The journals of Congress (which I have at hand) will show. Perhaps it was an artifice to add to the existing unpopularity of the federal administration respecting internal taxes. A direct tax was laid in exact conformity with the constitution, which declares that representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned from the several states according to their respective numbers, or population. It was then said by Mr. Jefferson's partizans that the taxes ought to be *direct*, that the people might *know* and *feel* what they paid. But these gentlemen have since taken care to repeal every such tax; and now dare not propose any tax which the people can *know* and *feel*. Instead of which, they have contemplated a vast addition to the duties already laid on imported goods—even at the hazard of encouraging smuggling, which would occasion losses probably beyond such legislative additions. Possibly the fear of this may hitherto have prevented the projected increase of the duties. Instead of which, or of any other sort of taxation, they have had recourse, *in time of peace*, to the borrowing of several millions of dollars, for the ordinary expenditures of the government!

We now see the reason why the government is determined "not to protect commerce by force," nor "risk a war until our resources are sufficient to defray the expences without creating burthens to make them unpopular." But our ordinary resources *never* will be sufficient to defray the expenses of war: the government know it: and the conclusion is unavoidable; That notwithstanding all their blustering (and there has been enough of this to make us ridiculous in our own eyes as well as in the eyes of foreign nations) our government are determined to submit, as they have submitted, to every sort of insult and injury, rather than go to war: for war will require more taxes, and taxes may render them unpopular. They choose rather to flatter the People to their ruin—than tell them the truths necessary for their safety, because the latter may prove unpleasant, and perhaps occasion some upbraidings of their de-  
ceivers.

Thus a course of thinking and of opinions having been industriously effected by Mr. Jefferson and his fellow-labourers, as the means of rising to the supreme power; and these opinions, in opposition to the system of administering the government which under WASHINGTON was judged essential to the public safety and welfare, having been long and zealously inculcated by the leaders of that opposition—they have become the fixed creed of the People. And now these same leaders dare not attempt to correct those erroneous opinions although they hazard the safety and independence of the country—as they have already caused the sacrifice of its interests and honour.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

May 13, 1811.

## LETTER XII.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

AMONG the topics which I proposed to discuss, I mentioned the *embargo*: and that I would prove to you, that it was not imposed "to keep in safety our vessels, our seamen, and merchandize," as Mr. Jefferson pretended, when he recommended that measure to Congress. The embargo law has indeed been repealed; but as all the laws since passed by our government to shackle our commerce, have grown out of that deceitful measure, it is necessary to bring it under review. Besides, it will contribute to the display of Mr. Jefferson's real character.

## THE EMBARGO.

On the 18th of December, 1807, President Jefferson sent to Congress the following message:

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States.*

The communications now made, shewing the great and increasing dangers with which our vessels, our seamen, and merchandize, are threatened on the high seas, and elsewhere, from the belligerent powers of Europe; and it being of the greatest importance to keep in safety these essential resources, I deem it my duty to recommend the subject to the consideration of the Congress, who will doubtless perceive all the advantage which may be expected from an inhibition of

the departure of our vessels from the ports of the United States.

Their wisdom will also see the necessity of making every preparation for whatever events may grow out of the present crisis.

I ask a return of the letters of Messrs. Armstrong and Champagny, which it would be improper to make public.

TH. JEFFERSON.

Dec. 18, 1807.

The communications accompanying the message consisted of four papers, which I describe, as far as was then permitted, in my letter of February 16, 1808, to the late Governor Sullivan.

1. A proclamation, dated Oct. 16, 1807, by the king of Great Britain, requiring his *natural born* subjects, sea-faring men, serving on board the ships of war, or merchant vessels of any foreign states, to return and aid in defence of their own. The right to issue such a proclamation, no well-informed man will question. It is a right exercised by the European Nations generally, perhaps universally, when they engage in war; and it is a right of peculiar importance to Great Britain at a time when her safety is menaced and endangered by the most formidable power which has ever existed in Europe. Thus far there seems to be nothing in the proclamation against which any one can take exception.—But it authorises and directs the continuation of impressments of British *natural born* subjects from *merchant* vessels.—What are the rights of Great Britain in this case, and what the rights of neutrals, is a very important

question, which would demand a separate discussion. It is sufficient at present to say, that the danger of impressments of American seamen was not *increased*; on the contrary, the precautions enjoined by the proclamation would lead to the conclusion, that the danger was *diminished*; and such I believe to have been the fact.

2. The second paper of the communication was a letter (bearing date September 18, 1807), from the French grand judge, Regnier, to the imperial procureur (or attorney) general of the Emperor's council of prizes, containing the Emperor's interpretation of his Berlin Decree of November 21, 1806, concerning which the Council entertained some doubts. - To the question, 1, Can armed vessels under that decree, seize in neutral vessels, either English property, or all merchandize proceeding from English manufactories or territories? the grand judge answers---“ His majesty notifies to me, that since he had not thought proper to express any exception in his decree, there is no ground to make any in the execution with respect to any thing whatsoever.” “ 2. His majesty has not decided the question whether neutral vessels going to or from England, although they have no English merchandize on board.”

Of *these two papers*, no secret was made; and for a plain reason, that British proclamation had many days before been published in the newspapers [the copy laid before Congress by the President had been cut out of a newspaper;] and so had the substance, if not the words of Regnier's letter. But they had excited little concern among our merchants and seafaring people, because they saw in the proclamation, not an *increased*, but a *diminished* danger of impressments; and they knew that the Berlin Decree and



the Emperor's interpretation of it, though violating our rights by treaty with France, and the law of nations, would not endanger many of our vessels, seeing the number of French armed vessels, commissioned to capture them, was not very considerable. That Bonaparte has possessed himself of so many vessels and so much merchandize of our citizens, has been chiefly owing to his practising various deceptions, against which our government interposed no effectual guard; on the contrary, their negociations and proceedings in relation to France, rather tended to put our citizens off their guard, and to render them insensible to the imperial snares in which so many have been caught.

The *Third* paper was a letter from General Armstrong to the French minister Champagny; and the *fourth* Mr. Champagny's answer. On these two last papers, I made the following remarks, in my last letter to Governor Sullivan before mentioned, viz. "Both these ought, in form or substance, also to have been made public. The latter [Champagny's answer], would have furnished to our nation some idea of the views and expectations of France. But both were withdrawn by the President, to be deposited among other executive secrets, while neither presented any *new* ground to justify an embargo." Why these two papers were *for a time kept secret*, you will presently see. But first be pleased to read the letters themselves.

*General Armstrong's Letter to Mr. Champagny.*

SIR,

Paris, Sept. 24, 1807.

I have this moment learned, that a new and extended construction, highly injurious to the commerce

of the United States, was about to be given to the Imperial Decree of the 21st of November last. It is, therefore, incumbent upon me to ask from your Excellency an explanation of his Majesty's views in relation to this subject, and particularly whether it be his Majesty's intentions, in any degree, to infract the obligations of the treaty now subsisting between the United States and the French empire?

I pray your Excellency, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed)

JOHN ARMSTRONG.

*His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Relations,  
Mr. Champagny's Answer.*

SIR,

Fontainebleau, Oct. 7, 1807.

YOU did me the honour, on the 24th of Sept. to request me to send you some explanations as to the execution of the Decree of Blockade of the British islands, as to vessels of the United States.

The provisions of all the regulations and treaties relative to a state of blockade, have appeared applicable to the existing circumstance, and it results from the explanations which have been addressed to me by the Imperial Procureur General of the Council of Prizes, *that his Majesty has considered every neutral vessel, going from English ports, with cargoes of English merchandize, or of English origin, as lawfully seized by French armed vessels.*

The Decree of Blockade has been now issued eleven months. The principal powers of Europe, far from protesting against its provisions, have adopted them. They have perceived that its execution must be complete, to render it more effectual; and it has seemed easy to reconcile these measures with the observance of treaties, especially at a times when the

infractions, by England, of the rights of all maritime powers, render their interests common, and tend to unite them in support of the same cause.

Accept, &c. &c.

(Signed)

CHAMPAGNY.

His Excellency General Armstrong, Minister  
Plenipotentiary of the United States.

Every reader can now judge of the correctness of my observations on these letters, made more than three years ago. He will see that the only subject of Armstrong's letter, was the Emperor's interpretation of his Berlin Decree, stated in Regnier's letter, of which (as I have already remarked) no secret was made; and that Champagny's answer repeats the Emperor's decision: and so far neither contained any secret. But mark the last paragraph of Champagny's letter, of which I said, that it "would have furnished to our nation some idea of the views and expectations of France." I now add, that it also presents to us an idea sufficiently clear of *Mr. Jefferson's views* in recommending the permanent embargo—viz. to co-operate with the principal powers of Europe in rendering "complete," and consequently "more effectual," the French Emperor's Decree of Blockade of the British Dominions. This it behoved Mr. Jefferson to keep out of sight: and who can doubt that this was one of his motives for withdrawing Champagny's letter—and Armstrong's of course? In the same letter to Governor Sullivan, authorized by the paragraph of Champagny's letter I am now considering, and other circumstances at the time, I asked these questions: "Has the French Emperor declared *that he*

*will have no neutrals\*?* Has he required that our ports, like those of his vassal states in Europe be shut against British Commerce? Is the embargo a substitute, a milder form of compliance with that harsh demand, which if exhibited in its naked and insulting aspect, the American spirit might yet resent?"

In saying that neither Armstrong's nor Champagny's letters "presented any new ground to justify an embargo," I meant, and so, I presume, it must have been universally understood, that they presented no new ground to justify an embargo *for the interests of the United States*. These interests required the publication of those letters, with a suitable comment by the President, that our citizens might have seen what were the views and expectations of the French Government; and *resistance to, not compliance with* those views, was demanded by our interest, our honour, and our safety.

That these letters, *unconnected with the embargo*, required no secrecy, *even in Mr. Jefferson's opinion*, we now certainly know: for just three months after

\* That the French Emperor said "there should be no neutrals," we learnt by the same vessel which brought Armstrong's and Champagny's letters.—It was afterwards gravely denied that Bonaparte had said "there should be no neutrals;" but we have since seen, under the hand of General Armstrong, our minister at Paris, the Emperor's declaration—"That the Americans should be compelled to take the positive character of either *Allies or Enemies*." This solemn declaration of the Emperor *in his council*, it is true, is mentioned by General Armstrong as having been made at a subsequent period: but the previous report that he had said "that there should be no neutrals," being precisely the same, and perfectly characteristic of the Emperor, I presume no one can doubt that it was his previous declaration which gave rise to the report.

he had recommended the embargo, he himself communicated them to Congress for the very purpose of being published. But mark how they were communicated—huddled in with a large mass of other papers, relating to British as well as French negotiations and proceedings, without the least intimation that he had before presented them to Congress, together with the British proclamation and Regnier's letter, as the grounds of the embargo\*! And certainly no person unacquainted with the secret could have suspected that Armstrong's and Champagny's letters were used as the principal grounds of the embargo. Why then did Mr. Jefferson withdraw them, saying it would be improper to make them public? For two reasons—to *conceal his apparent concurrence with the views of the French Emperor*—and to *wrap up the embargo in mystery, which astonished and confounded the people, and induced their acquiescence in the measure*. For the measure was public, and to go out to the people with the notice, that it would be improper to publish Armstrong's and Champagny's letters, or even to suffer them to remain any where but in Mr. Jefferson's own cabinet; whence the natural inference would be, that these papers containing the strong reasons for the embargo, but of a nature dangerous to be disclosed. And doubtless, in regard to his own views, Mr. Jefferson judged correctly. The publication of these two letters, *as grounds of the proposed embargo*, might have put the project in jeopardy. For although the implicit confidence of the majority in the wisdom and patriotism of the President, *with*

\* It was a common artifice of Mr. Jefferson to accompany his communication relative to *France* with something *British* to divert the attention of Congress and the people from the former to the latter.

*some other considerations*, assured its adoption in Congress; yet for its final success it was necessary that the blind confidence of the people, whose pecuniary interests would be so directly and essentially affected, should also be retained. But the *immediate* publication of Champagny's letter *as the ground of the embargo*, might have too clearly indicated, to some sagacious citizens, not members of Congress, and who would discuss the point with more freedom, the real motive of Mr. Jefferson in recommending it; and by its exposure have hazarded, not only the measure itself, but the popularity of its author; *before the PASSIONS OF HIS PARTY had been enlisted in its favour*. And this stratagem was crowned with a success truly incredible, had not the experiment verified it as a fact. The extraordinary spectacle was exhibited of a nation, with more vessels and property, and a greater portion of the people engaged in foreign commerce, than any other on the globe, the British excepted, submitting, for upwards of a year, to the total stagnation of that navigation and commerce, *without knowing WHY the immense sacrifice had been required!* A majority of the nation thought to repose entire confidence in the wisdom and patriotism of the President, were induced to believe his declaration that "great and increasing dangers to our vessels, seamen and merchandize," rendered the embargo indispensable. While he knew, and all who read Armstrong's and Champagny's letters well know, that they exhibited no dangers requiring an embargo. All the increased danger was exhibited in the letter of Regnier, stating the Emperor's decision on the meaning of his Berlin Decree; and that every merchant knows was considerable; even as the dust of

the balance, comparative with the whole of our foreign commerce laid prostrate by the embargo.

The official translation of the fifth article of the Berlin Decree is in these words: "The trade in English merchandize is forbidden. All merchandize belonging to England, or coming from its manufactories or colonies, is declared lawful prize." This is the article on which the grand Judge Regnier delivered the Emperor's decision, of which General Armstrong asks of Mr. Champagny an explanation "particularly whether it be his Majesty's intention in any decree, to infract (break or violate) the obligations of the treaty now subsisting between the United States and the French empire?" To which Mr. Champagny answers, by a repetition of the Emperor's decision. It was perfectly immaterial to whom the merchandize belonged: though to the citizens of the United States it was lawful prize, if it consisted of the manufactures or produce of England or her colonies. Now by our treaty with France, ratified by Bonaparte himself, we have a right to load our vessels with English manufactures and produce, not only when these belong to the citizens of the United States, but even when they remain the property of the British; and to capture them, because they are British property, is a direct violation of our treaty with France. But treaties and promises have long since ceased to bind the Rulers of the GREAT NATION. Bonaparte and his predecessors, the Directory, have been alike perfidious; and this Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison perfectly well know.

Mr. Madison [letter of May 22, 1807, to General Armstrong] calls the Berlin Decree, "a gross infraction of neutral rights." And in a subsequent letter [February 8, 1808,] referring to the Emperor's con-

struction (above stated) of this Berlin Decree, says, " it violates as well the positive stipulations of the Convention of September 30, 1800 [our last and only existing treaty with France] as the incontestable principle of public law. And yet the French minister, Champagny, we have seen, has the effrontery to say, " It has seemed easy to reconcile these measures (in executing the Berlin Decree) with the observance of treaties."

But I must again recur to Mr. Jefferson's message. Every reader will bear in mind that the four papers therewith communicated, were offered as the *sole ground* for laying an embargo. He said *they* " shewed the great and increasing dangers with which our vessels, our seamen and merchandize was threatened on the high seas and elsewhere, from the belligerent powers of Europe." I have shewn that the terms of the British Proclamation manifested a *lessening* not an *increase* of dangers to our *seamen* ; and it had no relation to *vessels* or *merchandize*. The other three papers regarded the French; and these then, if any, must show the " great and increasing dangers" mentioned by Mr. Jefferson. Now take his own opinion of the Berlin Decree, and of the French Emperor's construction of it, as expressed in Mr. Madison's letter to General Armstrong, dated February 8, 1808, in which he says, " the conduct of the French government, in giving this extended construction to its decrees, and indeed in issuing one with such an apparent or doubtful import against the rights of the sea, is the more extraordinary, *inasmuch as its inability to enforce it on that element, exhibited the measure in the light of an EMPTY MENACE.*" So now we see that the Berlin Decree and its extended construction, which " showed the great and increasing



dangers to our vessels, seamen and merchandize," amounted to—What? "an EMPTY MENACE!" because of the Emperor's INABILITY to enforce the execution of his decree upon the sea. And in his letter to Mr. Erskine, the British Minister at Washington, Mr. Madison says, "France was without the means to carry the Berlin Decree into effect."

And what opinion, Fellow Citizens, can you now form of the "illustrious Jefferson." He alarms you with dangers which he knew did not exist; and professing a tender concern for the preservation of our vessels, seamen, and merchandize, "these essential resources," recommends an embargo! In this single transaction (if other instances were wanting) you have full evidence of hypocrisy, and duplicity, and deceit, and assumed patriotism—assumed as a screen, behind which he contrived a scheme dishonourable to the nation, and pregnant with ruin. For nearly all the losses and sufferings of our seamen, merchants, and other citizens, with the ruin of many, and the failure of the public revenues, have grown out of the embargo—that fruitful mother of all the plagues by which, in the name of acts of Congress, imposing prohibitions and restrictions, our commerce and fisheries have been laid waste.

One plain, but very important inference, remains to be noticed and impressed. As you have now seen Mr. Jefferson's alleged ground of the embargo to be deceitful and false, it will be natural to inquire, what was the reason for inducing him to recommend the embargo! As I cannot suppose the worst of men to act without a motive, so Mr. Jefferson must have had some strong one to have taken so bold a step as to impose the embargo, such as we have seen it in its intended duration (which was purposely without limitation) and in its ruinous effect. Read once more

Mr. Champagny's letter of October 7, (while you indulge me in some repetitions), and see whether the motives I have detailed be not manifest.

The object of the Berlin Decree is plain---it was avowed by Bonaparte, viz. to cut off all trade of his subject, allies, and *neutrals*, with the British dominions, thinking by that means to ruin the commerce and destroy the power of Britain. Against this monstrous decree, violating our rights by treaty and by the law of nations, General Armstrong complained. In the answer of Mr. Champagny we are told, "the Decree of Blockade has been now issued eleven months. The principal powers of Europe, far from protesting against its provisions have adopted them. They have perceived that its execution must be complete, to render it more effectual, and it has seemed easy to reconcile these measures with the observance of treaties, especially at a time when the infractions by England of the rights of all maritime powers *render their interests common, and tend to unite them in support of the same cause.*" Here we find the motive for the embargo. The principal nations of Europe had adopted the decree, but to render it more effectual "its execution must be completed." It could not be complete while the United States carried on their extensive trade---equal, if not superior, before the fatal embargo to that of all Europe, the British islands excepted. The facts to be found in Mr. Jefferson's own official communications to Congress leave us at liberty to form no other conclusion than this---"That he recommended the embargo in order to render the operation of the British Decree complete." Recollect what I have before mentioned (in Letter XI.) that in less than three months after the date of Champagny's letter, and in four days after its arrival, with the other

dispatches at Washington, Mr. Jefferson recommended the embargo. Four days (as I had occasion long ago to remark), gave little enough time to digest and mature **SUCH A PLAN**; and that the people of the United States would have been shocked at an open proposition to shut their ports against the English commerce, and abandon all trade, at the command, or invitation of the French Emperor; they would not have endured it. The measure could be accomplished only by an embargo—an indefinite embargo—and that wrapped up in the mystery which I have attempted, and I trust successfully to unfold.

**TIMOTHY PICKERING.**

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### **LETTER XIII.**

**FELLOW CITIZENS,**

IN my last letter I mentioned the declaration of Mr. John Quincy Adams, while a Senator in Congress—that the British Orders in Council of Nov. 11, 1807, were not only a cause, but a principal cause of the embargo. His words are, that they, “stand in front of the real causes of the embargo\*.” And again he says, “These orders and the subsequent retaliating decrees of France and Spain [Bonaparte’s Milan Decree of Dec. 17, 1807, and that of Spain, its echo, bearing date the 3d of January following] have furnished *the only reasons* upon which I have acquiesced in its continuance to this day.” Here I pray it may be observed, that Mr. Adams, the advocate for the

\* Letter of March 31, 1808, to H. G. Otis, Esq.

embargo, has confirmed my statement, that the four papers communicated by Mr. Jefferson, when he recommended the embargo, did not furnish sufficient ground for its adoption by Congress—or rather, that they furnished *no ground at all*. For the British Orders in Council, and the Milan Decree, and the corresponding decree of Spain, furnished *the only reasons* for his acquiescing in the continuance of the embargo. Now as Mr. Jefferson's four papers remained in force precisely as when he communicated them, and yet furnished no reason for *continuing the embargo*, they could have furnished no reason for *originally imposing it*.—For recollect that it was “the great and increasing dangers to our vessels, seamen and merchandize,” *shown in those papers*, on which Mr. Jefferson *professed* to recommend the embargo. And these dangers, whatever they were, continued the same.

But to return to the British Orders in Council. If, as Mr. Adams has asserted, “they stood in front of the real causes of the embargo,” who that has witnessed the promptitude and eagerness with which Mr. Jefferson has always seized on every fact and circumstance to awaken and aggravate the public irritations against Great Britain, will believe that he would have been silent respecting those orders! But, says Mr. Adams, “they had not been officially received:” and this he offers as a reason why Mr. Jefferson did not mention them. I ask, then, why he communicated the British King's Proclamation of October 16, 1807? Had that been officially received?—No. Mr. Jefferson had seen it, as thousands of our citizens had seen it—in the common newspapers—from which he cut two copies, and sent one to each House of Congress, with his other flimsy pretences for an embargo. If

the mind of Mr. Jefferson was impressed with an idea of the dangerous nature of those orders, though resting only on newspaper report: if the apprehension of them really influenced his mind, as Mr. Adams says they influenced *his*, more than all the *communicated* causes of the embargo; why should he, by his silence, withhold their influence from Congress? Was it unlawful or improper that *their* minds should be influenced by a consideration which powerfully impressed *his own*? If the orders in council were at all in his contemplation, and really constituted a motive for the embargo, what objection could exist to his informing Congress, that such were the intimations in newspapers; and expressing his opinion that they furnished an additional reason for laying an embargo?—The truth is, those newspaper intimations, if they had ever been seen by the President, were entirely disregarded when he recommended the embargo. His attention was arrested by the communications he had received four days before from France; and his thoughts were busily employed in preparing for the adoption of an embargo—an embargo upon a novel principle—to change a *temporary* detention of our vessels at home—which was the universal understanding of the nature of an embargo\*,—into an *unlimited* suspension, or interdict of all foreign commerce! in reality a *permanent embargo*! a thing never before heard of! but which, under the simple name of *embargo*, contributed to deceive the people into a belief that it was but a temporary mea-

\* While the Embargo Bill was before the House of Representatives, a motion was made, (and by a democratic member) to limit the continuance of the embargo to sixty days: but the motion was not carried, by a majority of nearly two to one.

sure; and so to induce their acquiescence. Even Mr. Adams admits *that* to have been the impression on his own mind. In his letter to Mr. Otis, he says —“ I have, indeed, been myself of opinion *that* the embargo must *in its nature* be a *temporary expedient*.” Yes: and only twenty days from the passing of the Embargo Law, had elapsed, when Mr. Adams offered a resolution for the appointment of a committee to inquire at what period the embargo might, consistently with the public interest, be removed. “ But (says he) my resolution met no encouragement.” No: a new convert, and still in his novitiate, he was not let into all the secrets of the cabinet; from whose views nothing was more remote than a simple embargo, a temporary suspension of commerce. And as in voting for the embargo he reposed himself, with entire confidence, on the recommendation and superior information of the President: so afterwards, when his proposition in the Senate for fixing the time at which the embargo should have an end, and similar attempts in the House of Representatives, were rejected, or passed by with silent contempt; he, with becoming humility, acquiesced: reposing himself *now* on the superior wisdom of the majorities of the two Houses of Congress.—Yes: When he saw that the embargo had *changed its nature*; that what had been enacted under the *name* of an embargo, was *not* an embargo, but a total, unlimited interdict of all commerce with foreign nations—still his *candid* and *elevated* mind would not descend to entertain *suspicions* of *sinister* views in the Executive and his leaders in the two Houses! The men who had uniformly opposed all the measures deemed by his own father to be necessary for the safety, honour, and interest of our country, as well during Washington’s administration

as his own; and a series of artifices perseveringly practised, by which the people were deceived, had finally overturned the federal administration of our government: *these* men, it *seems*, had exhibited so much wisdom, so much patriotism, and had shown themselves so unambitious, so pure, so disinterested, in their opposition, that to *suspect them now* of sinister, unfair views, would be improper and dishonourable! Yet Mr. Adams admits "that vigilant observation is *at all times*, and *suspicion* may *occasionally* become *necessary*, upon the conduct of men in power." And of all men *suspicion* should have attached to those who ascended to power by the steps to which I have so often alluded, and of which he could not have been ignorant.

I presume it has been satisfactorily shown, that the rumoured British Orders in Council did not enter into Mr. Jefferson's views in recommending the embargo. Perhaps it will also appear that they were not in the contemplation of Mr. Adams when he gave his zealous assent to it; although he says these orders "formed to his understanding a powerful motive for assenting to the embargo," and in another place, as I have already remarked, that "they stand in front of the real causes for the embargo." Nay, he goes further, and represents all the other causes as *amounting to nothing*. His words are—"To argue upon the subject of our disputes with Britain, or *upon the motives of the embargo*, and keep them [the Orders in Council] out of sight, is like laying your finger over the *unit* before a series of *noughts*, and then arithmetically proving that they all amount to nothing." Keeping in mind these various assertions of Mr. Adams, concerning the British Orders in Council, and their powerful influence on his mind, to induce

him to vote for the embargo, I pray every reader to go back with me to view the original scene of passing the Embargo Bill in the Senate. This scene was represented three years ago, in my correspondence with Governor Sullivan; who having stated to me, that he had a letter from my colleague, Mr. Adams, "who voted for the embargo, and still considered it a wise measure and a necessary one," I was constrained, in my own justification, to detail his conduct on that occasion. I thus wrote to the Governor:

"In my first letter I informed your Excellency of the haste with which the Embargo Bill was passed in the Senate. I also informed you that 'little more time was repeatedly asked, *to obtain further information, and to consider* a measure of such moment, of such universal concern; but that these requests were denied;' and I must now add, by no one more zealously than by Mr. Adams, my colleague. Hear his words. But even your Excellency's strong faith in the President's supreme wisdom may pause, while independent men will be shocked at the answer of my colleague to those requests. 'The President (said he) has recommended the measure on his high responsibility: I would *not consider*: I would *not deliberate*: I would *act*. Doubtless the *President* possesses such further information as will justify the measure!'" On this extraordinary declaration I made the following remarks: "Need I give to your Excellency any other proof (though other proof abounds) of blind confidence in our rulers? Need I give further evidence of the dangerous extent of executive influence? When the people of Massachusetts see a man of Mr. Adams's acknowledged abilities and learning advancing such sentiments: when they see a man of his knowledge of the nature of all governments, and of



his intimate acquaintance with our own free republican government, and of the rights and duties of the legislature; especially of their *right* and *duty* to *consider*, to *deliberate*, and according to their *own judgment*, independently of executive pleasure, to decide on every public measure: When, I say, the people of Massachusetts see this, will they wonder if a *majority* in Congress should be *overwhelmed* by the authority of *executive recommendation*? And had I not reason to be alarmed at the dangerous extent of executive influence, which to me appeared to be leading the public mind, by its blind confidence, to public ruin?"

Such were my reflections in April 1808. The subject now requires some additional observations.

Universal experience, as well as the highest authority, assures us, that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If, as Mr. Adams represents, the rumoured British Orders in Council were so strongly impressed on his mind as to constitute the most powerful motive for the embargo, is it conceivable, can any man believe, that HE (as well as the President and every other Member of the Senate) would have been absolutely silent concerning them? When the embargo advocates in the Senate were urged to consent to a little delay, for the purpose of obtaining "further information," how could they, with Mr. Adams at their head, withhold their strong impressions, if they existed, respecting the Orders in Council? The orders rested, it is true, merely on newspaper reports, or other unauthorized statements; yet Mr. Adams says, the facts respecting them *were of all the most material*, upon a fair and impartial examination of the expediences of the Embargo Act

*when it passed\**. Still, however, not one word was uttered concerning them. Observe, moreover, that Mr. Adams was so far from offering the reports concerning the Orders in Council as grounds for passing the Embargo Bill, that he even disclaimed the knowledge of any facts other than those which the President had communicated; resting the decision on *his recommendation* and the *further information* which, Mr. Adams suggested, the *President* might possess. The inevitable conclusion from these details is, that the British Orders in Council were not even in the contemplation of Mr. Adams himself, when he gave his zealous assent to the embargo. And without imputing it to him a palpable violation of truth, his contrary assertion may be accounted for, by the subsequent actual appearance of the Orders in Council, which the administration and its partisans artfully blended with the original pretences for imposing the embargo: and the warmth of Mr. Adams's passions, and his prejudices, resentments and hatred towards Great Britain, led *him* also to confound them with his original motives for advocating and voting for the embargo.

But I must again recur to the extraordinary declaration of Mr. Adams, of the ground on which he voted for the embargo, 'The President (says he) 'has recommended the measure on his high responsibility: I would *not consider*—I would *not deliberate*: 'I would *act*. Doubtless the *President* possesses such 'further information as will justify the measure.' The French Emperor has a *legislative* body; but they frame no laws; these are prepared by his ministers, according to *HIS WILL*; and his *legislators have the*

\* Letter to H. G. Otis, Esq.

honour of giving their assent to them. In what does this practice of a despot and his slaves differ from the principle or sentiment formerly expressed by Mr. Adams in the Senate? It shocked even democracy itself in that body. "However I may VOTE (said a democratic member) *that* is too much for me to *say*." And for my own part I view the sentiment as so abhorrent to the principles of a free government; so derogatory to the character of a Member of Congress; and so disgraceful to a citizen and a man, that I am incapable of conceiving of any counterbalance in official honours and emoluments. An embassy, a judgeship, the presidency, or a throne, to an honourable and independent mind, would in the comparison be "as a drop in the bucket—and the small dust of the balance." Upon the principle advanced by Mr. Adams, what becomes of "the checks and balances, which are the main pillars of his father's great work," on the American Constitution? By the constitution of the United States, the Senate and House of Representatives were intended as checks on the acts of each other, and both as checks on the acts of the President. The sentiment expressed by Mr. Adams resolves the whole business of legislation into the will of the executive. I have been simple enough to suppose it to be the duty of every member of a legislative body, in a free government, to *deliberate* upon the matters recommended by the executive; to *consider* whether the measures proposed were supported by sufficient reasons, and were necessary or expedient for the welfare of the state. I still entertain this opinion, and that an implicit reliance on the executive; a blind adoption of his measures, would be a relinquishment of my independence—a violation of my duty, and a surrender of

the rights of the people. But such old notions are now much out of fashion. Whoever would obtain favour with the ruling power, must renounce them. "There is no getting along, or being any thing, without popularity," was a sentiment once expressed. Mr. Adams will not have forgotten it. And while every thing which Mr. Jefferson did, pleased a majority of the people, the sure way to obtain popularity and executive favour at the same time, was to please the President, and support his measures.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

#### LETTER XIV.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

A FEW more observations will conclude what I proposed to lay before you relative to the embargo.

If any proof in addition to those already exhibited were requisite to demonstrate that the British Orders in Council of Nov. 11, 1807, did not enter into the consideration of the Executive or of Congress, in imposing the embargo, they may be found in the writings of Mr. Jefferson, and the then secretary of state Mr. Madison. The latter on the 23d of December 1807 (being the next day after the passing the embargo law) thus wrote to Mr. Pinckney, the American minister in London:—"The *policy* and the *causes* of the embargo are explained in the President's message." This message and all the papers it referred to were either copied or described in my No. XII.; and the British Orders in Council not being among them (as it was impossible they should be, for they had not then reached the United States—nor was it known

that such orders had been issued) nor the most distant hint given that such orders were in existence; it follows conclusively that they were not one of the causes of the embargo.

But Mr. Jefferson himself bears direct testimony to the same point. In his public message to Congress of the 2d of February 1808 (more than six weeks after he had recommended the embargo) he for the first time mentions those British Orders in Council, and says—"I transmit them to Congress as a *further proof* of the increasing dangers to our navigation and commerce, which led to the provident measure of the act of the present session, laying an embargo on our own vessels." Thus Mr. Jefferson, who certainly knew *why* and for what *cause* he recommended the embargo, asserts in direct contradiction of Mr. John Quincy Adams, not that the British Orders in Council of November 1811, were an *original cause* of the embargo, but that they were a "further proof" that the embargo was a "provident measure."

It is true, that the language of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison afterwards assumed a somewhat different form; but this proves nothing but the artifice of these gentlemen; for having long experienced with what facility the mass of the people received the notions with which they wished them to be impressed, they perceived that artifice was better adapted than candour to the promotion of their view. I have already cited Mr. Madison's words, in his letter of December 23d, 1807, to our minister, Mr. Pinckney, in which he says, "the *policy* and *causes* of the embargo are explained in the President's message; but in his letter of February 19, 1808, after the Orders in Council had been received and published, he says—"My last (that of

December 23d) enclosed a copy of the act of embargo, and explained the *policy* of the measure; leaving causes," and introducing the unknown British orders (unknown and unthought of when the embargo was laid) as "among the considerations which *enforced* it." He adds, "the appearance of these decrees, [the British Orders in Council] has had much effect in reconciling all descriptions among us to the embargo, and in fixing, in the friends of that measure, their attachment to its provident guardianship of our maritime rights." That all descriptions of our citizens were ever reconciled to the embargo, is not true: a very large portion, from the beginning, saw in it only folly and mischief; and that it would be (as the event has proved) utterly inefficacious to procure the repeal of the French decrees and British orders: and they also believed, what to every candid mind I presume I have demonstrated, that, (as was said by a democratic member of Congress, when the embargo law was under consideration) "the hand of Napoleon was in it;" that it was an act of co-operation with the French Emperor in his system to destroy British commerce, and with it British power.

Mr. Jefferson's artifice was manifested in his answer of August 26, 1808, to the petition of the town of Boston against the embargo and its numerous additional laws. His words are—"the orders of England and the decrees of France and Spain *existing* at the date of these laws, are still unrepealed, as far as we know." Here indeed is a tissue of deceit—a want of truth mixed with artifice. By saying that those orders and decrees *existed* at the date of the embargo laws, it is plain that Mr. Jefferson meant to convey to the inhabitants of Boston and through them to all persons who should not advert to the distinction be-

tween the *actual existence* and the *knowledge* in the *United States* of the *existence* of those orders and decrees, the idea that they were the *causes* of the embargo laws: and therefore that *these* must be continued while the *causes* remain. But Napoleon's Milan decree, reinforcing that of Berlin, though more outrageous, was in Italy, four or five thousand miles from the city of Washington, on the 17th December, 1807; and it was on the very next day that Mr. Jefferson recommended to Congress to lay an embargo; and the second decree of Spain, adopting the Milan decree, was not issued until the 3d day of January, 1808, twelve days after the embargo law had been passed!

Among the proofs of the embargo being acceptable to the French Emperor, as stated in a former Letter, I omitted his Bayonne decree passed the 7th of April, 1808, directing All American vessels then in the ports of France, or which should thereafter go into those ports, to be seized; because their navigating the seas was contrary to the embargo laws of the United States! And thus while our own government pretended that the embargo was imposed to save our citizens and their property—not from capture by the English only, but from the clutches of the French Emperor—and to force him to revoke his Berlin and Milan decrees; he himself, well pleased with the embargo, passed another decree to enforce its execution! Are the rulers of our nation capable of blushing? Or are they alike dead to the sense of shame, of candour, and of truth?

The embargo having been for three years and upwards a subject of discussion, may now be reviewed with the less interest; but as it was the first signal co-operation (as I trust I have shewn such co-opera-

tion to have been the leading motive) of our government with the Emperor of France, it merited a fresh examination; and the more, as it was the basis of that system of our administration which has ever since harassed and now nearly ruined our commerce, and beggared the nation. The review was also necessary to the display, in one important instance, of the real character of Mr. Jefferson, marked, as I had said it was, with "systematic hypocrisy and duplicity." Facts, have also shewn that, as he gave assurance, Mr. Jefferson's system of measures and Mr. Madison's are the same. Mr. Jefferson's words, in answer to an address from the Tammany Society of Baltimore, are these—"The hope you express that my successor will continue in the same system of measures, is guaranteed, as far as future circumstances will permit by his enlightened and zealous participation in them heretofore, *and by the happy pacification he is now effecting for us.*" This "happy pacification" was the "arrangement" or agreement made with Mr. Erskine, the British minister at Washington, for the revocation of the British Orders in Council and the removal of the restrictions of our non-intercourse law as to Great Britain. "Happy pacification," Mr. Jefferson calls it, with Great Britain on terms which he believed the British government would accept: satisfied that an examination of all his own published statements of his negotiations would produce the like conviction on every candid mind: What if, after collecting his multiplied professions (and they would fill some pages) of his sincere desires to settle all differences and establish harmony between the United States and Great Britain—and his formal instructions to adjust every thing by treaty, what if, after all these professions and proceedings



*towards* such an adjustment ; I should show them all to be insincere ? and prove, *even by his own confession, that he did not desire any treaty with Great Britain ?* This investigation will require more time and deliberation than will consist with detached compositions for a weekly publication.

As to Mr. Madison's " happy pacification," I cannot repress the opinion that he has no right to expect and did not expect its confirmation by the British government ; and for the following reasons :

1. Because Mr. Madison knows that a minister plenipotentiary, merely as such received and accredited by the government to which he is sent, has not, by virtue of a general letter of credence, any authority to enter into any treaty or agreement containing stipulations to bind his nation.

2. Because Mr. Madison knows, that besides such a letter of credit, a minister who lawfully enters into such a treaty or agreement, must be furnished with a full or special power for that purpose. In other words, a minister must have *authority* to become a party to a treaty or agreement which shall be binding on his government.

3. Because he well knows that a foreign minister proposing to enter into such stipulations, ought to *produce* his full or special power ; and if he does not, that before a treaty or agreement be made, it is the *right* and *duty* of the government to which the offer of the treaty or agreement is tendered, to demand not only a *sight* but the *delivery* and *possession* of the instrument containing such powers. Accordingly, the ministers of two governments who negotiate and form treaties with each other, always *exchange* their powers, that each may have the *evidence* of the authority of the other to treat. But Mr. Madison, in

laying the case of his arrangement or treaty with Mr. Erskine before Congress, after the British government had disavowed and refused to confirm it, (because made in direct contradiction to his instructions) did not pretend that any such powers were exhibited by or required from Mr. Erskine. Mr. Madison therefore had no more, nay, he had less right to complain of that disavowal than would an individual, who makes a contract with the friend of a third person calling himself his *attorney*, but producing no power or letter of attorney for the purpose, having against such third person who should refuse to perform the contract made without his authority or consent.

4. Because the part of the special instructions of Mr. Erskine, acknowledged to have been exhibited on the occasion, contained three *conditions* on which an arrangement for the revocation of the Orders in Council might be made—And all these conditions Mr. Madison had rejected.

5. Because the language in which the agreement on the part of Mr. Madison was concluded, was so indecorous and offensive towards the British government as to render its confirmation highly improbable, if not impossible. And Mr. Madison must be under one of two charges—either of ignorance of the rules of decorum necessary to be observed in negotiations with a foreign government—an ignorance which neither he nor any one who knows him will admit—or that such offensive language was studiously selected in order to defeat the agreement, and render its rejection by the British government certain. But the agreement had produced a most desirable effect favourable to Mr. Madison and the reigning party, in the then pending elections in the great state of New

York --and a like favourable effect on the people throughout the Union; on whom, consequently, the rejection of the agreement would produce fresh and strong resentments against Great Britain, accused as its government would be, of breach of faith, by its "refusal to abide by the acts of its *minister plenipotentiary*;" as Mr. Madison expressed himself in his message of November 20, 1809, to Congress; thus disingenuously (and disgracefully to a person of his knowledge on the subject) holding up the idea, that a "minister plenipotentiary," *as such*, had authority to make a treaty or agreement binding on his government; the contrary to which no man knows better than Mr. Madison.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

## LETTER XV.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

HAVING given you a correct view of the embargo, and exhibited such facts and circumstances as prove beyond controversy, that it was not recommended by Mr. Jefferson, and under his influence passed into a law, for the causes he assigned, but really as a measure of co-operation with the French Emperor, in his system for destroying the *commerce*, and with it the power of Great Britain; the subject next in course is the Non-Intercourse Law, which succeeded the embargo. But an exhibition of this measure, 'as foolish and absurd as to ourselves it was mischievous, must be postponed, while I present to your consideration

## THE PROJECTED WAR WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

Our rulers have made frequent and ample professions of their *impartiality* towards the two great belligerents, France and Great Britain; and to support this pretension, have charged both with violating our neutral rights, and *affected* to direct their measures for redress equally against both. But I have shown the falsehood of this pretension. The embargo, particularly, so well coincided with the views of the French Emperor, as to meet his entire approbation. His minister, the duc de Cadore, in his letter of August 5, 1810, General Armstrong says, "the Emperor applauded the embargo." But without reciting the numerous instances, which I have observed during an attendance in Congress for the last eight years, but which it would take too much time to collect and present in their just form and colour, of the manifest *partiality* of our rulers in favour of France; I assume it as a notorious fact, demonstrated by their general course of conduct. With the multiplied proofs of such partiality before me, when I saw our rulers shutting their eyes to the greatest enormities, to the most atrocious acts of piracy, robbery and swindling practised by the great Emperor against my fellow citizens; while all the acts of Great Britain of which they complained were monstrously aggravated and distorted, in order to alarm and irritate the people against the only power which stood between us and subjection and slavery to France; I was led to apprehend it was their design to involve the United States in a war with Great Britain. But having since witnessed only a repetition of hard words, the mere swaggering of bullies—with abundant evidences of ill-will,

but without any solid preparations for such a war; knowing also that the treasury was empty; and that with their mischievous interruptions and restrictions of commerce, the public revenues were constantly diminishing; knowing farther their utter dread of imposing *new* taxes which would hazard or destroy their popularity; and believing that a large addition to the old taxes, consisting wholly of duties on goods imported, by the temptation it would offer to smuggling, might rather lessen than increase the actual receipts of revenue: knowing, moreover, the disposition of the people of the United States to remain at peace. From all these considerations I have, for a good while past, been disposed to believe our rulers were really as unwilling as the people were averse, to engage in any war even with Great Britain. In the actual state of things, I have even considered it fortunate that the absurd principle of Mr. Jefferson, *that the public treasury ought not to be RICH, because an accumulation of money might tempt the nation to go to war*, was literally exemplified; he having so managed our public affairs as to empty the treasury, and to compel his successor to borrow several millions of dollars, for the ordinary payments and expenses of the government.

But a late occurrence, the hostile act of Commodore Rodgers in his rencounter with a British sloop of war, has led me into a new train of thought. This rencounter having excited much public sensibility, and being, in my view, pregnant with serious consequences, no other subject demands such immediate consideration.

The meeting of the American frigate *President*, commanded by Commodore Rodgers, with the British sloop of war *Little Belt*, commanded by Captain Bingham, was doubtless accidental: but the circum-

stances under which the frigate sailed, as mentioned in the government paper at Washington, and the facts stated by Commodore Rodgers, in his official letter to the secretary of the navy, leave no room to doubt that his conduct was the result of previous orders from the Executive: in fact, to pursue the British frigate *Guerrier*, which, not long before, had impressed an American citizen from one of our coasting vessels. Commodore Rodgers says he was fourteen or fifteen leagues from that part of our coast called Cape Henry, when a sail was discovered in the east, that he gave her chase and continued it for more than six hours, before he came up with her; the vessel chased, all that time endeavouring to make her escape; for though the commodore could not see him so clearly as to judge what was her size, it is plain she saw the vastly superior size of her pursuer, or she would not have run from her. These and some other circumstances, which may be afterwards noticed, prove satisfactorily that this unwarrantable chase was the execution of previous orders; without which Commodore Rodgers, as commanding a *neutral-armed ship*, would not have felt himself justified in making it. The same government paper confirms this conclusion; for the commodore having requested a formal inquiry into every part of his conduct in the case, that paper informs us that the President refused to grant his request, because he approved of the commodore's conduct. This, indeed, has not been said in that newspaper under the hand of the President, or of the secretary of the navy; because there is a possibility that hereafter it may be convenient to say that the editor made the publication without authority. Certain it is, that although near a month has elapsed, we have heard of no inquiry. I take it for granted there

will be none: for if faithfully conducted, the commodore, for his own justification, would be obliged to produce his orders; which might officially expose the *Executive* to merited censure *for authorizing an act of war*.

Let us for a moment consider the act of *chasing*. In a time of universal peace, if vessels of the same or of different nations were to meet on the high seas, and hail each other, asking their names and of what nation they were, or any other civil questions, no one will assert that either is *obliged* to answer. The not answering may be an evidence of churlishness; but the refusal to answer would not authorize the firing of a single shot. Just as if two citizens meeting on the highway, and one civilly accosting the other, is passed without an answer, and unnoticed—no one would justify the former in using his pistol or his cane to kill or beat the other because he was deficient in politeness. But when a nation is engaged in war, and sends out its armed vessels to cruise on the sea, the common highway of nations, then the right to chase, to hail, to require an answer, to board, and to search, and eventually to attack, accrues to the vessels of the nation at war—because they have a right to capture those of their enemy. For without these rights, a naval war would be useless—or rather could not exist. The neutral armed vessel, on the contrary, seeing her nation is at peace with all other nations, possesses none of these rights—because not necessary to any of the objects of neutrality and peace: on the contrary she is bound to avoid every hostile act, except in her own defence when unjustly attacked. When she meets a belligerent armed vessel, it is a duty if it be demanded, to make known her neutral character, to prevent the shedding of innocent blood, and the

evils of war hazarded by a refusal to answer. As neutral, she has no evil or inconvenience to apprehend by making her neutrality known. She has no right to chase, to hail and insist upon an answer, to board and to search, because she has no right to make a capture. The American frigate, then, having none of these rights, is responsible for all the evils consequent on the chase and the concealment of her neutral character. Commodore Rodgers *assigns* but one reason for giving chase; and if he had not another resting on special orders from our Executive, he must be personally responsible for the blood that has been spilt. The *chasing* of the British vessel being an unlawful act, the killing of her crew, as the direct consequence of that unlawful act, is murder. And the commodore's conscience, would be ill at ease, but for the orders from his government, which he conceived himself bound to execute.

By his own official report, it appears, that Commodore Rodgers, on the 16th of May, at twenty-five minutes past noon, discovered a sail, when he was himself upwards of forty miles from Cape Henry; and the vessel whose sail he discovered in the east, from his mast-head, must have been many miles farther distant from our coast: that the vessel was standing towards him with a press of sail: that at half-past one o'clock, the symmetry (or just proportions) of her upper sails (which were then distinguishable from his frigate's deck) and her making signals, shewed her to be a man of war: that fifteen minutes afterwards, the commodore hoisted his colours: when the other vessel finding her signals not answered, changed her course, and stood to the southward.

Now we come to Commodore Rodgers's assigned reason for giving chase. "Being desirous of *speaking*



*ing her, and ascertaining what she was, I now made sail in chase;*" and he continued the chase until fifteen or twenty minutes past eight, when being distant from seventy to one hundred yards, says the commodore, "I hailed, *what ship is that?* to this inquiry no answer was given, but I was hailed by her commander, and asked *what ship is that?* Having asked the first question (continues the Commodore) I of course considered myself entitled by the common rules of politeness, to the first answer. After a pause of fifteen or twenty seconds, I reiterated my first inquiry of *what ship is that?* and before I had time to take the trumpet from my mouth, was answered by a shot." A shot was returned from the American frigate, and by the Commodore's statement, *without orders*, though just as he was on the point of giving an order to fire a shot in return. And thus commenced the action, which terminated in the killing and wounding of about thirty men of the crew of the British vessel. Such is substantially Commodore Rodgers's account of the chase and the action.

I have already noticed the rights of an armed vessel of a nation at war, on the high seas. She has a right to *chase*, because she is authorized *to capture* the vessel of her enemy. The commander has a right *to hail and to require an answer, that he may avoid the attacking of a friend or of a neutral*. If an answer be refused, he had a right to consider the vessel hailed as his enemy: and consequently to attack, and take her if he can, or to defend himself and prevent the capture of his own vessel. But, I repeat, none of these rights belong to an armed vessel of a neutral nation. And if by the refusal of the latter to answer and declare her neutral character, an attack ensues, the blame will rest wholly on the neutral. Whether

in the case under consideration the blame should *originally* attach to Commodore Rodgers, or to the President and Secretary of the navy, or to all of them, will depend on the orders given to the Commodore. That his orders authorized and required the chase of a British armed vessel I cannot doubt. Unless furnished with positive evidence, I shall not be inclined to believe that Commodore Rodgers acted in this case without special orders; and the declared approbation of the President is an evidence that he obeyed the spirit of his orders. Or if he had not such special orders, the President by his approbation, has adopted and made the act his own—that is, the act of the United States (represented by the President) *for which the nation is responsible, and for which an explanation and satisfaction will be demanded—and by our government REFUSED.* The grounds on which I have formed and expressed this opinion, and why satisfaction will be refused, will be given in my next address.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

## LETTER XVI.

ON THE PROJECTED WAR WITH ENGLAND.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

IN my last address I gave an account of the engagement between the American frigate *President*, Commodore Rodgers, commander, and the British sloop of war *Little Belt*, Captain Bingham, commander, and the reasons on which I pronounced the proceedings on the part of the American frigate unlawful, and *an act of war*. I also remarked, that those proceedings

originated, unquestionably, in the Orders of the Supreme Executive Power of the United States, for which *they* consequently are responsible—of which an explanation will be required—and for which satisfaction will by the British government be demanded—and by our government refused. I am now to exhibit the grounds of this opinion, and particularly why satisfaction being demanded will be refused.

I again take up the official report of Commodore Rodgers. His reasoning at the instant the action commenced, by a shot (as he states) from the Little Belt, is not a little singular, and requires particular notice, as indicative of the temper in which his orders were conceived and executed.—“When the first shot was fired (says the commodore) being under an impression that it might possibly have proceeded from accident, and without the orders of her commander, I had determined, at the moment, to fire only a single shot in return; but the immediate repetition of the previous unprovoked outrage induced me to believe, that the insult was premeditated, and that from our adversary being at the time as ignorant of our real force as I was of his, he thought this, perhaps, a favourable opportunity of acquiring promotion, although at the expence of violating our neutrality and insulting our flag.”

Here I must take leave to ask a few questions. As the commodore's impression was, that the first shot from the Little Belt might have proceeded from accident, and he was within speaking distance, why, instead of first asking an explanation, did he determine to return even a single shot? Was it the part of a commander possessing (as he says of himself, and I doubt not truly—but he had orders which he felt himself bound to obey) “an humane and generous heart,

determined not to spill a drop of blood unnecessarily," to return a shot which might spill the blood of more than one man, when a declaration of his neutral character, which it was his duty to have made, would have prevented the spilling of a single drop, and all the serious consequences which ensued, and the still more serious in prospect?—Why did the commodore think the firing of the first gun "an unprovoked outrage?" Was it possible for Captain Bingham to imagine the commodore's ship to be a neutral? After having been hard chased by her for more than six hours; and after seeing her, when within a mile and a half, taking the precaution to get *the weather gage*, the position to windward the most advantageous for action, which (the commodore says) the commander of the chase (Captain Bingham), from his manœuvres, during half an hour, appeared anxious to prevent; in a word, after observing the commodore's movements and conduct, during six hours and a half, to be precisely those of an enemy; after hailing "what ship is that?" to ascertain whether she was a friend or a foe, and the commodore had refused to answer; what other possible conclusion could Captain Bingham form, than that the commodore's frigate was an enemy? And by what rule of war, or of common sense, can the firing of a shot at an *enemy* be pronounced "an unprovoked outrage?" And why, because under such circumstances, the firing was repeated, should the commodore "believe the *insult* was *premeditated*?" And why should the commodore imagine, that Captain Bingham began the attack under the idea that it was "a favourable opportunity of acquiring promotion by violating our neutrality and insulting our flag," when Captain Bingham must necessarily have believed the commodore's frigate to be an *enemy*? Why should

Captain Bingham be required to see the American stars in the *President's* flag, when the commodore states that he had never been able to see the distinctive national marks in the flag of the *Little Belt*? But although the commodore could not see the size and force of the *Little Belt*, it is certain that Captain Bingham saw clearly the formidably superior size and force of the commodore's ship, or he would not have run from her. For this reason, when the commodore came along side, Captain Bingham aimed all his shot at the spars and rigging of the *President*, in the hope, by some lucky shot, to disable her, and then to effect her escape. And are the endeavours of Captain Bingham during more than six hours running to get away from the *President*, an evidence to the commodore's mind, that the captain was eager to attack in the hope of acquiring laurels and promotion? and "at the expence of violating our neutrality and insulting our flag?" The commodore says, that when the first shot was fired (it being fifteen or twenty minutes past eight in the evening, and the two ships distant from seventy to one hundred yards from each other), Captain Bingham was as ignorant of the real force of the *President*, as the commodore was of that of the *Little Belt*. How then (upon the commodore's ideas) should Captain Bingham dream of acquiring laurels and promotion by his attack, when it might turn out to be an attack on a vessel of much inferior force to his own? The commodore will certainly judge more correctly in his own case, and not expect an admiral's flag for "riddling" the little ship *Little Belt*, and killing and wounding thirty of her crew. But how are we to account for such strange ideas of Captain Bingham's motives for his attack, gaining in a moment the possession of the commodore's mind? He declares, that "neither hi

passions nor prejudices had any agency in this affair :” and yet he conceived that Captain Bingham, though necessarily taking him for an *enemy*, intended, by attacking him, “ to violate the neutrality and insult the flag of the *United States!*” After the action was over, after the commodore had made such havock among the crew of the *Little Belt*, he again hailed, “What ship is that?” and then “learned, for the first time, that it was a ship of his Britannic Majesty’s.” But had the commodore no misgivings, no previous suspicions as to the national character of the ship he pursued? If he had supposed her to be a French or an American ship (and none other except the British were to have been expected to be off our coast) would he have given either a hard chase of six or seven hours, *purely to gratify his innocent curiosity* “ to speak her and ascertain what she *was?*” Why should the thought have entered into his head that the ship he had pursued and come up with, meant, by the firing of a shot, to violate the neutrality and insult the flag of the United States, unless he believed her to be a *British* vessel of war? Surely, neither the commodore nor any of his political friends would entertain an idea that a public ship of our loving friend the French Emperor would violate the neutrality of the United States or insult their flag, especially when she was afterwards to find an asylum in our ports. It is true, indeed, that the Emperor had told our rulers that they were a miserable pack--- “men without just political views, without honor, without energy :” and the unresenting, abject submission with which they have borne this gross and outrageous reproach, proves, that the Emperor knew well their character, and that his signally contemptuous language was not misapplied. But still, this did

not violate our neutrality nor insult the dignity of our flag. The commodore states, that "previously he had reason to feel incensed at the repeated outrages committed on our *flag* by the *British* ships of war;" and I very much fear, that the readers of his own official report of his rencounter with the British ship Little Belt, will be constrained to suspect, *although the commodore himself did not*, that during the whole of this affair, he *felt* that (in pursuance of his orders) he was chasing and fighting a *British* ship of war, and thus avenging the "outrages" at which he had been previously incensed; and that strongly impressed with this idea, *though not himself aware of it*, the commodore thought that Captain Bingham likewise knew, or was strongly impressed with the idea, that the ship at which he fired belonged to the United States, without which impression Captain Bingham could not have intended to violate their neutrality and insult their flag. If the commodore's own statement will admit of an interpretation different from that I have given, I shall be very happy to see it. \* But let us look a little further, and consider his reason for giving chase.

Let it be recollected, that when first descried, the Little Belt was so many miles distant as to be discerned only from the commodore's mast-head, and standing towards him, and he, I presume, standing towards her: that about an hour afterwards, her upper sides were distinguishable from the commodore's deck; when she made signals, which not being answered by him, she changed her course and stood to the southward. Then, says the commodore, "being desirous of speaking her, and ascertaining what she was, I now made sail in chase." And so we are to believe, it would seem, that merely from curiosity, to

*she* speak a vessel at a great distance from him, on the high seas, and to learn her name and to what nation she belonged, the commodore gave her a six or seven hours chase, and sailed many miles out of his course! for the Little Belt at some fifty miles distance from our coast, ran to the southward, when the commodore gave her chase, although, according to the government newspaper, "he was ordered to put to sea immediately from Annapolis, and resume his former station, (I suppose at New York) cruising along the coast as before, for the purpose of guarding our maritime jurisdiction from violations by foreign cruisers."

The commodore, continuing his details concerning the vessel in sight, remarks, that "the symmetry of her sails and her making signals shewed her to be a man of war." But the commodore knew, that for a long time before, no other than *British* men of war had visited or approached our coasts: hence must have arisen in his mind another violent presumption that the sail he discovered and to which he gave chase, was that of a *British* ship of war. It appears also by the first reports of the battle, at Norfolk, by vessels coming in and which had heard the firing, "that but the day before Commodore Rodgers was spoken, inquiring for a British frigate which had been spoken not far off." Let us now suppose that the commodore had commenced the chase of the Little Belt, so much earlier as to have come up with her in broad day-light; and that showing her colours, the commodore had found "to what nation she belonged;" and that the commodore's ship became in like manner known to the Little Belt; and a destructive action had thus been prevented. Suppose then that her captain had asked the commodore why he,



*commanding a neutral ship*, had given him a six or seven hours chase *on the high seas*. Would the commodore have felt satisfied to have answered, "I was desirous of speaking you and ascertaining what you were?" And if the British captain, indignant, as every man of sense and spirit must be, on receiving such an answer, should have told the commodore *it was a most impertinent and unpardonable curiosity*--- could he deny the justness of the charge? or not be mortified by the well-deserved reproach? Is this official reason for the chase one which our administration would not feel ashamed to offer to the British minister should he be instructed only to ask an *explanation* of this affair? How much is it to be regretted than an officer whose prowess, in an honourable cause, would do honour to any country, should be drawn aside from the straight, ingenuous path his own heart would pursue, because the sinister views of the men in power, with the official right to command him, require it!

I have gone into so minute an examination of Commodore Rodgers's letter, because, far from furnishing a justification of his proceedings, it officially confirms the reports current at the time of his sailing; that he was sent in quest of the British frigate *Guerrier*, to demand the American citizen she had impressed on the coast; and if his delivery were refused, to attack and take him by force. It was also stated at the same time, in the government paper at Washington, "that it was well understood that the commanders of our public vessels were generally instructed to submit to no question from any foreign (really meaning any *British*) vessel, which shall wear the *semblance* of a threat, in *manner* or words." And so the *peace of our country* is placed at the discretion of each of our naval

commanders! From the whole I infer, that in the case under consideration, *an act of war was intended ; and an act of war has in fact been committed*, not on the identical ship in contemplation, but still on a *British* ship which will produce the same result. *And I now believe it to be the object of our administration to bring on a war with Great Britain ;* but in such a way as may enable them, by their own cunning and the experienced credulity of the people, to impress an opinion that Great Britain is the aggressor, while they, good souls, were sincerely and earnestly seeking reconciliation and peace. With as much brevity as possible I will state my reasons.

In my letter of February 16, 1808, to Governor Sullivan, on the embargo, I asked these questions : “ Has the French Emperor declared that he will have no neutrals? Has he required that *our ports*, like those of her vassal states in Europe, *be shut against British commerce?*” Is the embargo a *substitute*, a *milder form* of compliance with that harsh demand, which, if exhibited in its naked aspect, the American spirit might yet resent?” We have since learned from General Armstrong’s communications to our Executive, that the French Emperor *did* declare, “ that the Americans should be compelled to take the positive character of either *allies* or *enemies*.” But with all the baseness which Mr. Jefferson’s management has infused into the American character, the citizens of the United States were not then sufficiently degraded, in their own estimation, to receive patiently a plain direct proposition to shut their ports against British commerce. It was therefore disguised in the form of an embargo, an embargo which was calculated to produce the same effect, because it had no limitation. But before the close of that session of

Congress, in which it was imposed, as no man of sense out of the cabinet circle could discern any reason for it; and its mischievous consequences were clearly seen, and had begun to be experienced, it was found necessary to sooth the people, by holding up a prospect of its real repeal or suspension. This prospect, however, was a deceitful one, because it was made to rest on the future acts of France and England; that is, on the revocation of their decrees and orders affecting neutral commerce. Now Mr. Jefferson knew that the embargo was acceptable to the French Emperor, who, instead of making way for its removal, would choose to rivet it on our necks; and Mr. Jefferson also knew, that as the British Orders in Council were declared to have been issued (and after ten months frank and open notice to the United States, they were unquestionably issued) only in retaliation for the previous French Berlin Decree; the revocation of the latter must precede the revocation of the British Orders in Council, and then indeed the British government stood ready, and pledged itself to revoke them. Thus Mr. Jefferson, when vested by Congress with power to suspend the embargo on the revocation of the French decrees and the British orders, knew that such revocation was not likely to take place, and in fact has not taken place to this day. Mr. President Madison's extraordinary proclamation relative to the French decrees to the contrary notwithstanding. The pressure of the embargo, however, *upon ourselves* was so severe, as to exhaust the patience of the people, and the government, to save their sinking popularity, changed their ground, and by an act called the non-intercourse law, gave some relief, by opening a direct commerce with the world generally, and an *indirect* commerce with France and Great Britain and their

dependencies. At length this foolish and oppressive law also necessarily gave way, and all restraints on our commerce were removed. But another act put into the hand of the President the dangerous power of reviving the restrictions of the non-intercourse law on certain events, of which as matters of *fact* he was constituted the sole judge. Events indeed of a nature so simple as to be within the competency of any man of common sense and common honesty to decide, whether they had or had not taken place : I mean the revocation of the decrees and orders of France and Great Britain, events which have not yet happened, but which Mr. Madison, stepping aside from the authority given him by the law, proclaimed to have taken place in regard to France, when the French Emperor, whom Mr. Madison knew to be the most perfidious of human beings, had only given a *declaratory promise* to revoke them after the 1st of November, 1810. Even Mr. Madison himself has not now the hardihood to say the French decrees *are* revoked. In his late answer to the petition of the inhabitants of New Haven, he ventures only to say, that “ the French government *declared* that its decrees were revoked.” He now at least knows that they were not revoked when on the 2d of November, 1810, he proclaimed to the people of the United States and to the world, that they were revoked. When he issued that proclamation, he had no right to believe them revoked ; if for no other reason, yet for this, That what was called a revocation was to take place in *future*, and on *conditions*---on certain acts to be *previously* performed by Great Britain, which Mr. Madison had abundant reason to know would not be performed. The French minister in his letter to General Armstrong, in which (to use the words of Mr. Madison), “ the French government

declared that its decrees were revoked," thus expresses himself—"I am authorized to declare to you, Sir, that the decrees of Berlin and Milan are revoked, and that after the 1st of November, they will cease to have effect, it being understood (*bien entendu que*, on condition or provided\*), that *in consequence of this declaration*, the English shall revoke their Orders in Council, and renounce the new principles of blockade which they have wished to establish." Nothing can be more plain, than that before the French Emperor's *declared* revocation could be a revocation *in fact*, it was necessary that the English, *simply on that declaration*, should first repeal their Orders in Council and renounce the new principles of blockade which the *Emperor says*, they wished to establish. Mr. Madison had abundant reason to know that the British would not and could not comply with these conditions prescribed by the French Emperor; and therefore that his *declared* revocation would never become a revocation *in fact*; and it was not the *promise* but the *fact* of the revocation (or of such modification of the decrees and orders as that they shall cease to violate the neutral commerce of the United States) which Mr. Madison was by law authorized to declare by proclamation. And thus this solemn and most important act of the Supreme Executive of the United States, appears to be alike destitute of legal authority and of truth.

The President's proclamation, and the unjust act of Congress which grew out of it at the close of the late session, called the non-importation act, cannot

\* Mr. Madison knows, as every one acquainted with the French language knows, that "*bien entendu que*," by his translator rendered, "it being understood," mean *on condition*, or *provided that*.

be of long continuance. 'The farmers and planters who raise wheat and cotton, and those who deal in lumber and naval stores, may for a while be satisfied with the vent they find for those articles in the British markets ; but as the American merchants are forbidden by that law to bring back in return any articles of produce or manufacture from the British dominions,---this one-sided traffic must soon come to an end ; and our rulers must be aware, that the people, as after their much long suffering under the embargo, will renew their murmurs and complaints. What scheme then can they contemplate to rid themselves of this embarrassment, and at the same time to satisfy the Emperor of France? and what will completely answer these purposes? *A war with Great Britain.* Our "loving" friend Napoleon declared such a war for us more than three years ago ; but we were not then ripe for it. Now it is presumed to be practicable. The great commercial and agricultural state of New York, and Massachusetts the greatest navigating state in the Union, have their governments in the hands of the devoted supporters of our national administration. Now then is the time to fasten upon our country the Napoleon-Jeffersonian system, the same which the French Emperor has established on the continent of Europe---*an entire prohibition of intercourse, commercial or otherwise, with Great Britain and all her dominions in the four quarters of the globe.* A snug little war which may exist (not be carried on) without taxes or revenues will perfectly accomplish the object. War with Great Britain at once shuts *our* ports to *her* and *hers* to *us*. Such a war is the simplest mode imaginable to introduce and establish the permanent embargo. *For the good people of the United States will not be so unreasonable as to complain that*

*they are not allowed to trade with their enemies in open war.*

A further developement of this scheme and the many reflections to which it will give rise (for it is a fruitful theme) would extend this address to too great a length, and must therefore be deferred.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

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## LETTER XVII.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

IN a former address, I made a remark of this kind: That Great Britain, pressed by a war unexampled in the annals of the world—all Europe being leagued against her, Spain and Portugal excepted, which she was defending with her blood and treasure—was extremely unwilling to have the United States added to the number of her enemies: and that partly from a consideration of her interests, and partly from the just contempt her Government must have felt for the men who so ruinously and disgracefully administered ours (although it is impossible the British Government should *feel* for them more contempt than the French Emperor has *expressed and dashed in their faces*)—she shut her eyes against, or did not think it expedient to resent, their glaring partialities towards her formidable enemy, and, amid multiplied professions of amicable dispositions, their marked ill-will and injurious acts towards herself. These provocations on one side, and forbearance on the other, have served only to encourage their aggravated repetition; until, at length, our Government have ven-

tured to commit a *direct act of war*. I know that our Administration will say that the action between their frigate and the British sloop of war took place in the dark, when Commodore Rodgers could not know what ship he fought; their newspaper has already made their apology, or rather their justification. "We understand (says the National Intelligencer) that the conduct of Commodore Rodgers, in repelling and chastising the *attack so causelessly and rashly* made on the United States frigate President, by the British ship of war the Little Belt," has the approbation of the President of the United States. And therefore it was that I went into so minute an examination of the Commodore's official report of this affair; and I trust it has appeared that the action with the Little Belt was not accidental and by mistake; but the consequence of special orders intended to produce, not indeed precisely the action with the Little Belt, but an action with a British ship of war; to be brought on, however, in such manner as might enable them to justify it to the great majority of the people, whom for a series of years they had found ready implicitly to believe their assertions. If Commodore Rodgers had met with the British frigate Guerrier, instead of the Little Belt, then he was to demand the impressed American, and if not delivered up, to attack the Guerrier, and if successful (as expected, the frigate President being of force greatly superior to the Guerrier), then the Administration story would have been, that after waiting near four years to receive satisfaction for the attack on the Chesapeake, without obtaining it (although prevented solely by their own misconduct), they had now taken satisfaction for themselves. But the action of the Little Belt will serve their purpose just as



well. Connecting the long chase with the circumstances of the action, the proceedings on the part of the American frigate admit of no justification. It is impossible that it should pass over without a demand on the part of Great Britain of an explanation and satisfaction; and as satisfaction will be refused, war will ensue.

“ But what madness (it may be said) to provoke a war with Great Britain, when we have no fleet—no army—no money in the treasury—but a remnant of revenue from commerce, and that to be annihilated as soon as war takes place—without taxes, or the courage to impose them—and without credit to borrow, as any government must be, which is destitute of funds to pay regularly the interest and ensure the payment of the principal!”

These, to be sure, would present, to ordinary statesmen, strong and insurmountable objections to war, but none to our wise and economical rulers. Ours will be the most simple and easily conducted war that was ever waged since nations began to quarrel. This will be its fashion. The want of revenue will make it necessary to lay up our vessels of war, to rot in the warm fresh water of the Eastern Branch of the Potomack at Washington\*. The small band

\* Four or five years ago, a gentleman who had been in our navy in 1798 or 99, being at Washington, went to see the Navy Yard: some members of Congress were present. The gentleman made some observations unfavourable to it. A democratic member from Massachusetts too, made answer—That he preferred that place to all others, because our vessels of war would no where else rot so soon! Another democratic member of Congress, but from a southern state, within two years past, thus expressed himself to me: “ If all our frigates and armed vessels were collected together, and in flames, and by *spitting* I could put out the fire, I

of troops called the army, will necessarily become still smaller. If the States possessed of seaports wish to defend them, their respective legislatures must provide for the expence. If for want of an adequate defence they should be burnt—why so much the better. Mr. Jefferson, the enlightened oracle of democracy, when objecting (as he formerly did object) to the establishment of manufactures in the United States, and considering them as the means of producing the condensed population which forms great cities, sagely remarked, that “the mobs (meaning the mass of the population) of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body\*.” Great cities are of course great sores; and for great and inveterate sores, *cautery*, or burning, is an effectual operation. The want of revenue will also prevent the further payment of the public debt, or even the interest of it, but necessity has no law. The Government will profess extreme regret; and satisfy the people (except the public creditors) by ascribing their inability to pay to the unjust war waged against us by Great Britain, “whose power (as Mr. Jefferson says) on the ocean is so ascendant,” as to render commerce, our only material source of revenue, impracticable. Many zealous partisans of the Administration will not think any apology to be needful:

would not *spit*.” I doubt not this member will recollect his declaration. I do not mention it as any reproach to *him*; because I entertain for him the most sincere esteem as an honest and amiable man. But such was really his way of thinking—how erroneously, my fellow-citizens in the commercial and navigating states will judge.

\* Notes on Virginia, answer to query 19.

they will not hesitate to say openly, that the public debt is due chiefly to Englishmen—and let them lose it, or wait until a peace shall enable the country to fulfil its obligations\*. To the inhabitants of the sea-

\* Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, when they became Presidents of the United States, severally made professions of their political creeds, one article of which was the exact fulfilment of the national engagements to pay the public creditors. But the man who originally opposed, and afterwards execrated the establishment of the system devised under the administration of Washington for the honest payment of the public debts, cannot have any love for it; and will therefore not grieve overmuch for the public inability to discharge those debts. What real regard to the public faith can be felt by the men who could deliberately do an act by which some innocent foreigners have, in effect, been defrauded of four hundred thousand dollars? Every body knows that Mr. Jefferson in the cabinet, and Mr. Madison and his other partisans in Congress, vehemently opposed the establishment of the bank of the United States, under the pretence that it would be a violation of the constitution. In the cabinet Mr. Jefferson's sophistry was swept away by one motion of the masterly hand of Hamilton. The *legal* bugbears which the former had conjured up and grouped together, to alarm the pure mind of Washington, who was not a lawyer, were dispersed by the light of truth emitted by Hamilton, like a morning fog before the rising sun. This defeat was never forgotten by Mr. Jefferson and his partisans; and the first opportunity was seized to destroy the institution: and this was at the time when the term of the charter expired. But the United States originally possessed of stock in the bank to the amount of two millions of dollars, remained, when Mr. Jefferson became President of the United States, the proprietors of 2220 shares at 400 dollars each, prime cost, amounting to 888,000 dollars, and yielding an interest of more than eight per cent. a year. Notwithstanding which, in less than a year and a half (*viz.* June 30, 1802), when the revenues of the United States were rapidly increasing, and amply sufficient for the support of government and the regular payment of the public debts, Mr. Jefferson caused those shares of bank stock to be sold. The institution devised by Hamilton, so wisely framed, and so faithfully managed, gained

ports who have subsisted by trade, and to seafaring men, they will say, We have immense territories open for your reception; fine lands, which wait only for hands to cultivate them. To such of them as do not incline to emigrate into the wilderness and become farmers, but remain attached to commerce, navigation, and the fisheries, they will say, Trade is out of the question; but the British merchant vessels monopolizing the commerce of the world, cover the ocean: fit out privateers—we will give you commissions: make your fortunes, if you can; and by your prizes supply the habitual wants of the people. By privateering too, you will show your patriotism; for the duties on your prize goods may furnish that quantity of revenue which will be indispensably necessary for the public officers, and pay the members of Congress their wages.

Thus it appears that for the contemplated *passive war*, no funds will be necessary, not even our ordinary peace revenues.

universal confidence, and its stock rose in price, so that a share which cost the United States but 400 dollars would sell for 580 dollars, or 45 per cent. above par. Then it was that Mr. Jefferson ordered the shares above mentioned to be sold; and the sales brought into the treasury of the United States the sum of 1,287,600 dollars. The purchasers were *Englishmen*, who, by the dissolution of the bank of the United States, have thus lost 400,000 dollars—or to be perfectly exact, 399,600 dollars, the difference between the price they paid to Mr. Jefferson for the United States, and the price to which the shares were reduced by the dissolution of the bank—or the non-renewal of its charter; an event which no man who regarded the public interest and the public faith, and still less foreigners, could have expected; but which the circumstances I have stated leave no room to doubt was contemplated by Mr. Jefferson and company, when they sold the United States' shares in the bank to those Englishmen; and which therefore will be considered as a deliberate fraud.

If a war with Great Britain should take place, privateering will be the only mode of annoying on the part of the United States; and fortunes are already enjoyed, in anticipation, to arise from the captures of British vessels and merchandize. But this will prove a vain expectation. During a greater part of our revolutionary war, when Great Britain had to contend with the fleets of France, then powerful, and finally those of Holland and Spain, privateering was carried on successfully; but for the last year or two more fortunes were lost than gained. Experience had taught them a more effectual mode of securing their commerce. Our privateers and their prizes fell into the hands of the vigilant and more powerful British cruisers, and privateering proved a losing game. At the present time, whatever remains of the Spanish navy is on the side of Great Britain. Fleets of France and Holland have been destroyed, and the remnants are kept shut up in their harbours; while the armed ships of Britain far outnumber those of the whole world beside. With such ample means at her command, Great Britain can sweep the ocean: and if she had desired the destruction of our commerce, as carried on by our own vessels, which her enemies among us (who are the real enemies too of our own country) pretend, she, long ere this time, might have destroyed it.

I have just remarked, that in the projected war with Great Britain privateering will be the only mode of annoyance on the part of the United States: but shall we not take possession of the British dominions on our northern and eastern borders? This has often been threatened: it is a part of the bullying system in regard to Great Britain; but it has never been seriously contemplated; and such members of

Congress as I have heard mention it only made themselves ridiculous for the grave faces assumed for the occasion. It was repeatedly intimated in the earlier part of the session which commenced in the autumn of 1807, after the attack on the Chesapeake, when Mr. Jefferson had made a great bustle about preparations for a war with Great Britain. This bustle was kept up in Congress, which teemed with hostile propositions towards that power; especially when the special mission of Mr. Rose was known and his arrival expected, to make that satisfaction for the attack on the Chesapeake which the conduct of Mr. Jefferson had prevented being given in London. It was weakly imagined that this noise of war would make an impression on the mind of Mr. Rose. General Smith, in the Senate, said, "If the British minister arrives and sees the *clangour* of preparations for war, his language, possibly, and very probably will be very different from what it will be if he finds us reclining on the hopes of a continuance of peace. Within a week I expect a resolution will be brought into one house or the other, to raise 30,000 men. I wish the new minister who is coming may see that we are prepared for war."—Such a resolution, or a bill in form, was accordingly laid on our tables, and there, with other similar abortive projects, slept through the session. The conquest of Canada, I have said, was never seriously contemplated. The southern leaders probably imagined that the threatened invasion of that country might influence the British councils to yield to the demands of our Government; and unquestionably they supposed their partisans in the northern States would be flattered by the project. But the northern States may rest assured, that it will be the last thing attempted by their

southern friends, or rather masters. The men who now rule the United States will never willingly take any step which will add to the population and power of the northern States. And Canada being on their borders, would, if conquered, naturally unite with them, and add to their weight in the decisions of great national questions.

But the folly of attempting the conquest of Canada would be equal to the difficulty of achieving it. From the British power in that quarter, we have nothing to apprehend: but if Canada were to fall into the hands of France, we should have every thing to fear. And if the conquest were to be made by the United States, the country, either by force or treachery, would be transferred to France. To maintain the possession against the attempts of Great Britain to reconquer it, would require an army and expenditures, far surpassing our whole present military establishment. But it would be in still greater danger from France, whence might slip out a force sufficient to wrest it from our hands—if under such administrations as have governed us for the last ten years any resistance should be made. The reason imperiously urged by the French Government to that of Spain, in the year 1800, for the retrocession of Louisiana, was, “that Louisiana was an ancient possession of France.” So was Canada: and were it once in our hands, its restoration to France would be as imperiously demanded of the United States, as was the province of Louisiana of Spain. And would such an administration as Mr. Jefferson’s or Mr. Madison’s, which has so long been cringing at the feet of Bonaparte, resist the demand? Certainly not. But let France possess herself of Canada, and then what additional demands would be made? The

northern parts of New York, the western parts of Pennsylvania, the State of Ohio, the territories of Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois, the States of Kentucky and Tennessee, the Mississippi territory, and the whole of Louisiana westward of the Mississippi, would also be in like manner demanded; for in all these vast regions France once had military posts or settlements; and she would claim and demand all of them as "her ancient possessions;" and with as good right as she demanded and compelled the Spanish Government to regrant Louisiana. But Canada remaining in the hands of Great Britain, she will keep fast shut and bolted that northern door, by which the French would enter and repossess her ancient territories, and then, by the joint operation of intrigue, corruption, and force, attempt the subjugation of the whole United States. Instead, therefore, of our attempting the conquest of Canada, sound policy would require its being kept in the hands of Great Britain.

But although our southern rulers will never, by conquest or otherwise, voluntarily add to the strength of the northern section of the United States, they will not hesitate to increase that of the southern section, with or without right. Hence the measure as base as it was unjust, of taking possession of West Florida, *a country to which* (as I shall take occasion to show) *we have no title*, and we should not have attempted, had not the distressed and enfeebled condition of Spain, oppressed and overrun by the armies of Europe's tyrant, rendered her incapable of sending thither an adequate military force for its protection. With the like unrighteous views the conquest of East Florida will be undertaken; and this by the very men, who for so many years have been raising a hue and



**cry** against Great Britain for asking the surrender, and on refusal for taking the Danish fleet, to prevent its falling (as it would immediately have fallen) into the hands of her implacable and formidable enemy. The British, at war for their existence, took from the Danes some twenty vessels of war, and the rulers of the United States, while we are at peace with all the world, under a flimsy pretence of title, seize one Spanish province, and without even that pretence, or any other which will bear the light, appear to be preparing to seize and by force of arms to take possession of another. But the taking of East Florida will coincide with and render more complete, the grand object of the projected war with Great Britain, *the putting an end to all commerce and intercourse with the British dominions*, in correspondence with the French Emperor's system for destroying the only power which can effectually controul his march to universal empire. By taking possession of East Florida, whose waters unite with those of the United States, they will prevent the renewal of that traffic which during former arbitrary restrictions imposed by Congress on our commerce, was so advantageously carried on by the citizens of Georgia. British vessels entered the Spanish harbours adjacent to St. Mary's, and there received the cotton for which the Georgians so much wanted a market.

Another most important object and effect of the projected war will be the cutting off all supplies of grain, rice, flour, beef, pork, and fish from Spain and Portugal, for whose calamities inflicted by the French Emperor, our rulers manifested no sympathy; but on the contrary, they and their genuine adherents appeared to anticipate with pleasure the subjugation of those countries by the universal tyrant, and which

has been hitherto prevented by the great and effectual assistance of Great Britain. Our sagacious *patriots*, with Messrs. Jefferson and Madison at their head, have formerly believed that the United States, by withholding their supplies of provisions could produce a famine in the British dominions in Europe and the West Indies; and I do not know that experience has yet cured them of this folly. Be this as it may, they undoubtedly suppose, that Spain and Portugal, for several years the theatres of a most destructive war, ravaged by the French armies and unavoidably much exhausted by their brave defenders, will be incapable of further resistance, if supplies from the United States be withheld. French cruisers have already captured and destroyed our vessels laden with provisions and destined to the ports of Cadiz and Lisbon, and those captures as well as other the most horrible French outrages on our neutral rights, find zealous advocates among the adherents of our administration.

Thus it appears, that a war with Great Britain is calculated to produce all the effects which the French Emperor could desire, in the full expectation that it will hasten her downfall, and at the same time reduce the United States to beggary, and leave them a defenceless prey to his insatiable ambition. Such subserviency to the views of France, of which I have in the course of these addresses given ample proofs, is, as it respects Mr. Madison in particular, now confirmed by Robert Smith, late secretary of state, in his pamphlet just published in vindication of his resignation. And if a great majority of the people continue their blind confidence in their rulers, (Mr. Madison and his partisans, with Mr. Jefferson at

their head), such will be the fatal result of the measures they have planned and will pursue.

**TIMOTHY PICKERING.**

### **LETTER XVIII.**

**FELLOW CITIZENS,**

IN my first address I anticipated the scurrility against me with which the vehicles of slander and falsehood have since teemed. And if in giving you some traits of the characters of your rulers for the last ten years, and of the leaders of democracy, my sole or primary view had been to hold them up as objects of scorn and contempt, their unprincipled advocates might, with at least "the plausible appearance of a probability," have ascribed it to unjustifiable resentment or malice. But apart from the public mischiefs, the deep injuries brought upon our country by the misconduct of these men, they would not have attracted so much of my attention as to have drawn from me a single expression of reproach or censure. If their mismanagement of public affairs could have been ascribed to weakness, then commiseration and regret that these had been intrusted to incompetent hands, would alone have been expressed. But they have been held up to your view as men of enlightened minds, and your two Presidents particularly, as political luminaries of the first magnitude, and patriots of the purest order. Hence they have received your implicit and unbounded confidence. And hence the evils which oppress the country. And hence the necessity of exhibiting these men in their true characters; to convince you that they were

never entitled to your confidence; and that this must be withdrawn, or the country, even now on the edge of the precipice, will be plunged into an abyss of ruin. I will therefore proceed in my work, regardless of calumny, and of all the personal consequences of a determined opposition to fraud, deception and treachery, wherever they appear, and to that baseness of fear and servility which, in rulers, may be equally fatal to the liberties and independence of our country.---The subject of the following address will be,

**PRESIDENT MADISON'S SUBSERVIENCY TO  
FRANCE.**

At the close of my last address I remarked, that the subserviency of our rulers to the views of France, of which I had indeed given ample proofs, was as it respected Mr. Madison in particular now confirmed by Mr. Smith, late Secretary of State, in the pamphlet he had just published in vindication of his resignation. This attachment and devotion of Mr. Madison to France are of ancient date. The French Minister in Philadelphia, in the last years of our revolutionary war, had acquired such an ascendancy in Congress (of which Mr. Madison was then a member) as almost to dictate the resolutions they should adopt, as far as they were peculiarly interesting to France. It was this French influence in Congress which procured the disgraceful instructions to our ministers, Messrs. Adams, Franklin, and Jay, "to make the most candid and confidential communications upon all subjects to the ministers of our generous ally, the King of France, to undertake nothing in the negotiations for peace or truce, without their knowledge and concurrence, *and ultimately*

*to GOVERN themselves by their advice and opinion."* From the fatal consequences of this absolute submission to the French court, the United States were saved by the penetration, wisdom, inflexible integrity and patriotism of Mr. Jay; for Dr. Franklin was disposed to be governed by the instructions; and Mr. Adams was in Holland, until after the basis of the treaty of peace, between the United States and Great Britain had been formed by Mr. Jay, with the British minister, Mr. Oswald. I have formerly mentioned, that when Mr. Adams arrived in Paris he heartily co-operated with Mr. Jay. Dr. Franklin also had previously concurred with Mr. Jay---after the latter, refusing to degrade himself and his country by placing both in the power of the French minister, and induced the British government to send Mr. Oswald a new commission, empowering him to treat with us, not as colonies, but as the independent United States of America.

But although the terms of the treaty of peace thus obtained were advantageous to the United States, perhaps beyond the expectations of the most sanguine, yet many members of Congress were extremely dissatisfied---because the French court was displeased---because the treaty had been made without the advice, and contrary to the interested opinion and wishes of the French ministers---and because our negociators regarded the dignity and great interests of their country more than instructions by which both were laid prostrate at the feet of the ministers of France. Among these partisans of France in the Congress of that day, no one, perhaps, was more conspicuous than Mr. Madison; and were his conduct at that time fully displayed, his servility now would appear to be a continuation of his

early attachment and devotion to France, at the expence of the honour and the interest of his country.

My information on the subject is to this effect: That there were three points for which the *independent patriots* of the day strenuously contended. First, that our *independence* should be considered as a *given point*, and that Great Britain should, *at the outset*, treat with us as *independent states*; it being considered that to *enter* on a negotiation without this admission, would be to descend from the high and honourable ground of *independence*, to the former condition of *colonies*; and also be the means of *prolonging the war*; for the direct object of our alliance with France being "to maintain effectually the liberty, sovereignty and independence, absolute and unlimited, of the United States;" as soon as that object should be obtained---in other words, as soon as Great Britain should acknowledge and treat us as *independent*, the United States would have no reason, *on their own account*, to continue the war. But France, and Spain, which finally became a party in the war, might have, and in fact had, other objects of *their own* to accomplish, by a continuance of the war: and therefore the French court so earnestly endeavoured to prevent our insisting upon the admission of our independence as a *preliminary* to our commencing a negotiation with Great Britain.---Two other points were in like manner insisted on by the same *independent patriots*---our *right to the fisheries*, and our *claims to boundaries*, which were, westward as far as the Mississippi; with the free navigation of that river. And a member of the Old Congress has stated to me, that against these most important claims, the French minister in Philadel-

phia remonstrated by memorials to Congress; that Mr. Madison supported these memorials; and that to prevent our negotiators in Paris insisting on those three points, the disgraceful instructions before quoted were ultimately given; by which *they* were ignominiously placed under the *direction* and *their country* at the *mercy* of the French Prime Minister, the Count de Vergennes; and “that when the treaty [of peace] admitting and securing those great points was received, he [Mr. Madison] was the leader of the opposition in Congress to its being ratified; because those points were obtained without the concurrence and against the views of Vergennes. And that he [Madison] even contended that it should be sent back to France for the consent of Vergennes before the ratification.” That there was a zealous opposition to the ratification of the treaty, on the grounds above mentioned, is unquestionable. A vote of censure against Mr. Adams and Mr. Jay was not obtained, but conversing once on this subject, and mentioning a report made by the then Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Chancellor Livingston) against the treaty, or the conduct of the negotiators, Mr. Adams told me that he actually received a letter of reproof from the Secretary; and that it was then among his papers at Quincy. Why the French government was so strenuously opposed to the concessions of the three points above mentioned, on the part of Great Britain, will hereafter be shewn.

The same spirit of devotion, abject servility towards France, combined with hostility to England, has since been conspicuous in Mr. Madison. It was manifested in the virulent opposition given by him and his associates (doubtless having Mr. Jefferson as their guide and head) to the treaty of amity and

commerce with Great Britain, negotiated by Mr. Jay in 1794. The French government affected to consider it as equivalent to a treaty of alliance with Great Britain, to which the rights and interests of France were sacrificed; than which nothing was more unfounded and false. The same spirit is manifested in the whole of Mr. Madison's correspondence with the Secretary of State, in "his enlightened and zealous participation" in Mr. Jefferson's system of measures, and in his continuing to pursue them since he succeeded in the Presidency.

In his answer to the Tammany Society of Baltimore, dated May 25, 1809, Mr. Jefferson said, "The hope you express, that my successor will continue in the same system of measures, is guaranteed, as far as future circumstances will permit, by his enlightened and zealous anticipation in them heretofore, and by the happy pacification he is now effecting for us." This happy pacification (as I have heretofore remarked) was the deceitful arrangement with the British Minister, Mr. Erskine, for settling the affairs of the Chesapeake, and the revocation of the British Orders in Council. I called it *deceitful*, because I believe that the offensive and insulting clause which, we have understood, actually prevented its ratification by the King of Great Britain, was inserted on purpose and in full expectation that it would produce that effect. We now find, by the pamphlet of Mr. Robert Smith, that the offensive clause was contrary to *his* ideas of propriety, *proposed and insisted on by Mr. Madison himself*.

While so ready to use offensive and insulting language to the British government; or, to use the words of Mr. Smith, to address to it sentiments "not reconcilable to that dignified decorum which the



comity [courtesy] of governments in their intercourse with each other ought to observe ;” we have now the evidence of Mr. Smith, that Mr. Madison forbade the sending to General Armstrong even the moderate animadversions which *he* had prepared, upon the most insulting letter that was ever addressed by one government to another—the Letter of the French Minister, the Duke de Cadore, of February 14th, 1810 ; in which, after a train of contemptuous reproaches, he characterizes those who administer our government, as “men without just political views, without honour, without energy.” To this grossest of insults Mr. Madison would not hazard expressing to *that government* the slightest resentment, or sensibility ; nor make the least complaint of the perfidious seizure of millions of American property in French ports : seizures whose atrocity was aggravated by the groundless pretences and palpable falsehoods, by which the French minister attempted to justify them. Instead of giving scope to the just resentments which such a letter could not fail to excite in every independent mind ; and to the indignant language of a man feeling for his own honour, and for the dignity and interests of his country, which his duty as Chief Magistrate imperiously required him to assert and maintain, he contented himself with a pitiful, evasive paragraph *inserted by his special direction*, in a letter from Mr. Smith to General Armstrong, his Minister to the French Court. Here it is :—“ As the *John Adams* is daily expected, and as your further communications by her will better enable me to adapt to the actual state of our affairs with the French Government, the observations proper to be made in relation to their seizure of our property and to the Letter of the Duke of Cadore of the 14th February, it is by

*the President deemed expedient not to make, at this time, any such animadversions.* I cannot, however, forbear informing *you*, that a high indignation is felt by the President, as well as by the public, at this act of violence on our property, and at the outrage, both in the language and the matter, of the Letter of the Duke de Cadore, so justly portrayed in your note to him of the 10th of March."———This paragraph I call *evasive*, because, by postponing the strong and dignified remonstrance and demand of reparation which the insult and injury required to be instantly made, it was evidently intended by this course, finally to omit doing either. And why, seeing Mr. Madison was not insensible to the insult and injury, would he put off for a moment, and finally omit (as from Mr. Smith's statement we are authorized to conclude he has omitted) to vindicate the honour of our government and the rights of our plundered citizens? To what can such ignominious subserviency to France, such unspeakable baseness and servility be ascribed? To what, but a *pusillanimity* which utterly disqualifies him for the high station he occupies—or a *treachery* which demands his impeachment and removal? Who that is not alike base or treacherous, or both, can approve this conduct, and support and praise such a man? Who not alike contemptible can withhold his contempt.

The character of the seizure of American property above referred to demands a special consideration. The robberies and piracies committed by the orders of the French Emperor, and the instances of his wanton destruction of our vessels and their cargoes, by burning and sinking them on the high seas, (an outrage which the gentle Mr. Madison calls "the most distressing of all the modes by which the belli-

gerents exert force contrary to right") have been so numerous and for so long time familiar to us, they have ceased to excite surprise, and almost to rouse resentment.

On the 1st of March, 1809, when the Jeffersonian-Napoleon Embargo---(the delight of the French Emperor---the object of scorn and contempt to England---and to *ourselves* only terrible and ruinous) ---had been fourteen months in operation; our rulers, convinced of its inefficacy in regard to Great Britain, and dreading the consequences of popular discontents, which had rapidly increased; yet too proud to acknowledge the folly of the measure, sought a retreat in the *Non-Intercourse Law*---a law which forbade all commercial intercourse with Great Britain and Ireland, their colonies or *dependencies*, and with France and her colonies or *dependencies*, or with any place in possession of either; while it opened the doors of commerce to all the world beside. And to render this prohibition complete, it was enacted, that all vessels sailing under the flag of Great Britain or France, which, after the 20th of May 1809, should enter the ports of the United States, should be seized and condemned. But it was known to our rulers, while they affected, in the terms of the law, still absolutely to restrain our commerce with those two powers, that they would receive *indirectly* all the supplies they could desire from the United States, and that by the usual management in trade *we* should receive from them such of their products and manufactures as should be very necessary for us. In *words* this measure wore the appearance of equality and impartiality towards the two belligerents; but like every other measure of the kind, it was equal and impartial only in *appearance*. France had no

merchant vessels to enter our ports---Great Britain had many; and it was against Great Britain exclusively that this prohibition was calculated to bear. Further, the "dependencies" of Great Britain were her colonies and conquests over which she exercised direct and positive dominion. France possessed some similar "dependencies." But she had also *other dependencies*, of greater extent and importance---countries and states which she had conquered, or by fraud and violence had seized, whose immediate rulers were kings, appointed by the French Emperor himself. Such were Spain, Naples and Holland; countries which our Executive rulers *chose*, in violation of the truth of facts known to them and the world, to consider and treat as independent states, while their pageant kings implicitly obeyed their creator, Bonaparte, and decreed justice or injustice at his will. But this very cunning contrivance, to favour France (for that I believe was its object more than to enlarge the sphere of our commerce) by facilitating the introduction of all the supplies it needed, and which the United States could furnish, proved to our merchants a snare in which were surprised and caught, some millions of their property---*never to be set free*. For after the lapse of a year (to wit, on the 23d of March, 1810) the French Emperor at Rambouillet, issued a Decree, founded on this Non-intercourse Law, ordering to be seized and sold all American vessels which had entered or should enter the ports of France and her dependencies after the 20th of May 1809. And the French Minister, the Duke de Cadore, assigned to General Armstrong the provisions of the Non-intercourse Law, *and the manner of its execution by our Executive as the*

Emperor's reasons for his Rambouillet Decree. He says,

"The Emperor had applauded the general Embargo"——"The act of the 1st of March has raised the embargo, and substituted for it a measure the most injurious to the interests of France. This act, of which the Emperor knew nothing until very lately, interdicted to American vessels the commerce of France, at the time it authorized that to Spain, Naples, and Holland; that is to say, *to the countries under French influence*: [in other words, the dependencies of France] and denounced confiscation against all French vessels which should enter the ports of America. Reprisal was a right, and commanded by the dignity of France." See the Duke de Cadore's Letter of August 5, 1810, to General Armstrong. In a former letter, (that of February 14, 1810,) the Duke had told General Armstrong, "That as soon as his Majesty was informed of this measure [the Non-intercourse Law of March 1, 1809,] he considered himself bound to other reprisals on American vessels not only in his territory, but likewise in the countries *which are under French influence*. In the ports of Holland, of Spain, of Italy, of Naples, American vessels have been seized, because the Americans have seized French vessels." The nature of *reprisal* is well known, and was emphatically expressed to General Armstrong on this occasion: "If you [the United States] confiscate French property under the Law of Non-intercourse, they *will* confiscate your property under their Rambouillet Decree."

I am well aware that the reasons assigned by the French Minister for the Rambouillet Decree are but

*false pretences.* LYING *formal, organized* LYING is a part of the French Emperor's system of government, as the plunder of American "commerce is within the scope of his policy."\* But those who still affect to believe in his promises—who, like the President and Congress of the United States, pass laws and issue proclamations founded on the promises and declarations of the Emperor Napoleon, whose open violation of the law of nations and of his treaty with the United States, Mr. Madison had himself publicly stated; whose utter disregard of truth, whose perfidy and complicated crimes can in modern times find no parallel, and which have been manifest to them and to the world—such men, I say, who have had the evidence of his falsehood and perfidy before their eyes—evidence received and read by the President, and by him laid before Congress: such men cannot consistently object to the Emperor's iniquitous perversion of their own acts, and offering them as reasons for his robberies; for they still continue to trust him.

\* "The most extraordinary phenomenon ever known—a moral prodigy unexampled in the history of mankind, is now exhibited in France. I mean the regular, systematic, elaborate organization of FALSEHOOD, *as the basis of the government, and the soul of all its public acts.* "Faber's Sketches of the Internal State of France, quoted in the American Review for April, 1811."

At the close of my seventh address, without having then seen this number of the American Review, and without having adverted to any conformity of principles in government in the Chief of the French Empire, and the late Chief of the United States, I remarked, "That Mr. Jefferson had learned with what facility a nation might be *deceived*. And that so conformable was his practice to this idea, it was manifested in so many of his acts—*Deception* might be considered as the operative principle of his administration."

Among the papers laid by the President before Congress at the commencement of the last session, was a letter of July 5, 1810, confirming what had been said in his letter of June 5th from Mr. Secretary Smith to General Armstrong, in which is the following passage: "As has been hitherto stated to you, a satisfactory provision for restoring the property lately surprized and seized [under the Rambouillet Decree] by the order or at the instance of the French government, must be combined with a repeal of the French edicts, with a view to a non-intercourse with Great Britain; such a provision being an *indispensable* evidence of the just purpose of France towards the United States." But notwithstanding this determination of the President on the 5th of June and July, without any restoration of the property so surprized and seized, and without any provision for such restoration; nay, after a positive declaration by the French government that it was taken as a reprisal, and that "the law of reprisal must govern;"\* that is, absolute confiscation. Notwithstanding all this, and without an actual repeal of the French Decrees, and only upon the declaration of the most faithless of human beings, that those Decrees would be repealed on certain *conditions*, one of which (the previous revocation of the British Orders in Council) it remained exclusively with the British Government to perform, but which Mr. Madison knew would not be performed (because as early as the 31st of August, 1810, the British Secretary of State wrote to our Minister in London, that before such revocation of the Orders in Council could take place "the Repeal

\* General Armstrong's Letter of September 10, 1810, to Mr. Secretary Smith.

of the French Decrees *must actually have taken effect*")---notwithstanding all these things, Mr. Madison issued his proclamation declaring that "the Edicts of France violating the neutral commerce of the United States had (on the 1st of November last) been so revoked as to cease to have that effect!" Thus proclaiming to the United States and to the world as a *fact*, what he did not know to be a *fact*; on the contrary, what the official evidence in his possession required him to believe was *not a fact*; and in proclaiming which, *as a fact*, he must knowingly have disregarded the essential provision of the law of congress under which he professed to act, and from which alone could be derived the authority to declare the Non-intercourse Law to be revived against Great Britain.

Let us now see in what manner Mr. Madison gives to Congress information of the atrocious Rambouillet Decree, by which millions of American property have been seized and confiscated. Having mentioned the (pretended) revocation of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, he says, "It would have well accorded with the conciliatory views indicated by this proceeding on the part of France, to have extended them to all the grounds of just complaint which now remain unadjusted with the United States. It was particularly anticipated that, as a further evidence of just disposition towards them, restoration would have been immediately made of the property of our citizens seized under a misapplication of the principle of reprisals, combined with a mis-construction of the law of the United States. This expectation has not been fulfilled."\* So gentle and so mild is the Pre-

\* Message to Congress, December 5, 1810.



sident of the United States in giving to Congress information of this flagitious act of the French Emperor; when, if he had felt as a man, as an independent citizen, much more if he had possessed any consciousness of the duty, with the honest resolution to perform it, of the Chief Magistrate of the United States, charged with the preservation and defence of their dignity, and of the rights and interests of their citizens---he would have burned with indignation in reciting this abominable robbery, and the false and insulting pretences upon which it was committed. But did Mr. Madison really “anticipate” and “expect” the restoration of the millions of American property seized and confiscated under the Rambouillet Decree? If he did, then his childish credulity demonstrates his utter incapacity to manage the affairs of the nation. If he did not anticipate and expect that restoration, then he is chargeable with the most detestable vice in a solemn address to Congress—an address too at the opening of the session, when full and precise information of the state of the great affairs of the nation is particularly expected, and it is the President’s constitutional duty to render. On the 1st of March, 1809, Congress, for injuries alleged to have been received from France and Great Britain, continue a law forbidding American vessels to enter their ports, and pass a law (the Non-intercourse Law) to exclude from our ports the merchant vessels of those two nations; and giving eighty days notice of this exclusion, declare that if after that time any of them ~~enter~~ the ports of the United States, they shall be seized and confiscated. What was the conduct of Great Britain on this occasion? Her vessels conform to the laws, and abstain from coming to our ports. Neither do any French merchant vessels

enter our ports—*none were expected to enter—they have no merchant vessels which cross the Atlantic.* At length the law expires by its own limitation, and many of our vessels are taken and carried in, or voluntarily enter the ports of France and her dependencies: that is of Holland and Naples, of Italy and such of the ports of Spain as were in the possession of France. But vastly greater numbers of our vessels enter the British ports. What treatment do they receive from the two nations? In all the British dominions they are perfectly safe. They sell and buy with perfect freedom, and come away when they please. In France and her dependent states they are seized and confiscated. But mark the singular perfidy and flagrant injustice of the French Emperor. The Non-intercourse Law was published in the American newspapers which are sent to France. General Armstrong, “with sufficient promptitude,” (as he informs us) delivers an official copy of the law to the French Government. A whole year or more elapses without any complaint against the law. Then the Emperor secretly passes a Decree (the Rambouillet Decree of March 23d, 1810) to take effect---not sixty or eighty days after it should be made public---but from the 20th of May 1809, ten months before the Decree was made! ordering all American vessels which after the 20th of May had entered or should enter the ports of his empire, or of his colonies, or of the countries occupied by his arms, to be seized and sold. And in order to enlarge the sphere of this horrible outrage, to draw more vessels within his grasp, the Emperor keeps the Decree in his pocket until the 14th May, 1810, when it is published in his newspapers; and this appears to have been the first notice obtained of it by the American Minister at his court!

The Emperor had previously prepared to spring his net. Four commissioners were sent to Holland to take possession of the American property to be found there; while his royal brothers and agents were doing the same thing in Spain, Italy, and Naples. This whole scene of unequalled perfidy, treachery, and iniquity, was communicated to our executive by General Armstrong, in his Letter of May 24th, 1810. And yet with the full knowledge of all this, Mr. Madison has the audacity to inform Congress, that he "anticipated" and "expected" the property thus perfidiously, treacherously, and iniquitously seized, confiscated and sold, would be *restored*, as an evidence of the *just* disposition of the French Emperor towards the United States! What could induce Mr. Madison, in the exercise of one of his most solemn and important duties to make to Congress, to the nation and to the world, a declaration which, on a view of the facts and circumstances here stated, must evidently appear to be unfounded and false? The answer to this question, with additional reflections, will appear in my next address.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

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## LETTER XIX.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

IN my last address, I exhibited the perfidious, treacherous, and iniquitous character of the seizure and confiscation of a multitude of American vessels and cargoes by the French Emperor, in France, Spain, Holland, Italy and Naples, under the pre-

tence of *retaliating* for some provisions of the Non-intercourse Law of March 1st, 1809, a law approved by Mr. Jefferson among the last acts of his administration. I stated, from Mr. Madison's own communications to Congress the Declaration of the French Government, that this seizure "being an act of reprisal, the law of reprisal must govern"—that is, an irrevocable condemnation of the property. Mr. Madison knew also, by past events, that the restoration of property so seized and confiscated, was hopeless; and particularly for a reason formerly given him in another case, by General Armstrong; *That the amount of property at that time seized was so great, as alone to render hopeless all attempts at saving it.* Mr. Madison, as well as every other man of information in the United States, well knows that *the right and the wrong*, in any case, is never a question with the French Emperor; but merely *what he should get or lose* by any of his acts. Notwithstanding all which, Mr. Madison dared to inform Congress, that he had "anticipated" and "expected" the property so seized, by an act of *retaliation*, and to a *vast amount*, would be restored\*! What could induce him to make this

\* We are just now informed, that the French Emperor has ordered to be released sixteen American vessels which had voluntarily entered the French ports since the 1st of November, 1810, on which day, as President Madison had declared, the Berlin and Milan Decrees had been repealed.<sup>1</sup> On the faith of this Proclamation, unwarranted by law and unsupported by fact, a small number of (chiefly, if not wholly, small vessels,) ventured to enter the ports of France. These the French Emperor caused to be seized; and after holding them for many months under sequestration, he has been *graciously* pleased to restore them to the consignees, with *permission* to sell their cargoes, but *obliging* them, after paying enormous duties on them, to take, in return, *two thirds* of the proceeds of the sales in French *silks*! Such is

declaration, which from the face and circumstances exhibited in the preceding number must evidently appear to be unfounded and false, I am now to inquire and explain.

It will be recollected that I have represented Mr. Jefferson and his leading partisans, who have risen to power by deceiving the people, as having seized upon their general prejudices in favour of France and against England (prejudices which were the result of our revolutionary war) as the surest means of acquiring popularity. While France, under the name of a Republic, appeared to be struggling in a terrible revolution, to establish a free government, she enjoyed the good wishes of all the people of the United States: men of all parties joined in bidding her *God's speed*. Some few there were, indeed, who, wise by the lesson of history, or in their own profound reflections, saw nothing in the French revolution which could lead to so happy a conclusion. They foretold, and we see their predictions verified, *that it would end in a military despotism*. These wise men wished to check the extravagant enthusiasm of the people, so far as to keep the United States safe from the whirlwind of that revolution. And under the powerful influence of Washington this was happily effected. Our state of neutrality was proclaimed, and

the *freedom* and such are the advantages of our trade with France! And what has the Emperor in view, in this wonderful indulgence? The fishermen of Marblehead, where the Emperor appears to have very numerous friends, perfectly understand the old proverb—*To throw in a mackarel to catch a cod*. The above small number of small vessels, seized without any pretence of justice, have been set at liberty to tempt a greater number of larger size to come within the reach of his hook and the sweep of his net.

by our government its duties were then impartially performed. This neutral system, justified by our rights as an independent nation, and called for by our interests, proved obnoxious to a multitude of our citizens, whose violent prejudices rendering them blind to all the enormities of the actors in the French revolution, they clamoured against their own government, because it was not infected with enthusiasm wild as their own; and its members and supporters were reviled as monarchists, aristocrats, and enemies to republican government. These unfounded reproaches artfully raised and industriously circulated by ambitious demagogues, were used as powerful means to undermine and overturn the federal administration. Hitherto, the opposers of the government had been known as *anti-federalists*, because from the beginning they had opposed, and endeavoured to prevent the adoption of the present federal constitution of the United States, which now they profess so much to admire. Exposed to just reproach as *anti-federalists*, that is, as *enemies to that bond of union*, by means of which, under the administration of federalists, our country had risen from poverty and insignificance, to wealth, importance and dignity; those men artfully rid themselves of that unpopular name, and assumed that of *republicans*; and falling in with and flattering the people in their extravagant admiration of the new “sister republic” of France, succeeded in making them believe *that they were exclusively patriots and staunch friends to republican government*; and with this cant they continued to deceive the people. That this deception should continue while France continued to call itself a *republic*, is not very wonderful—*its names*, mistaken for *realities*, influence a

large portion of mankind. But under that imposing name, France was governed by a succession of ruthless tyrants, haughty, unprincipled, unjust, trampling on the rights of independent nations, violating treaties, and committing atrocious piracies on the high seas. Their conduct towards the United States, more especially in the years 1796, 1797, and 1798, furnished but too abundant proofs of the truth of this change. Yet France was still the favourite of our exclusive patriots and republicans; her rulers boasted of *them* as her partisans and friends; and it is certain that among them, amidst her unexampled insults and injuries to the United States, she always found apologists and advocates. Still she called herself a *republic*; and in that name overturned all the republics on earth, except our own, which was saved wholly by our distance beyond the reach of her arm. The tyranny at home of these republican rulers has been surpassed only by the iron despotism of the arch enemy of mankind, the Imperial Napoleon. Yet, in this height of tyranny, these republican rulers professed, like some of their American brethren, *to adore the people*. "The sovereign people" was for ever in their mouths; and the people, dupes to this flattery, fancied they were free. What was their "sovereignty" and their "freedom" may be understood by the following fact. Mr. Monroe (now Secretary of State) on his return from France, where as American minister he had resided about two years, came to Philadelphia. In conversing with him on the state of France and the condition of the people, he made to me this striking remark—"The people are *nothing*, and the government *every thing*." If the French people (and Mr. Monroe had the best oppor-

tunities to know and judge of their condition) were at that time "nothing," how much "less than nothing," are they now? Then the magic charm of the word *republic*, a name so dear to Americans, though in France an empty shade, furnished some apology for their attachment to that country; but now, when even the name is banished, when nothing is more odious, nothing more detestable in the eyes of her *imperial master*, than *republican government*; when too, all the atrocious robberies, piracies, and insults committed by her self-called republican rulers, are repeated, and with aggravations, by her single despot: how is the continued devotion of our rulers and their followers to France to be accounted for? Chiefly on the ground which I have stated. By cherishing and animating the prejudices of the people in her favour, and exasperating their antipathies to England, the leaders rose to power; and by persevering in the use of the same means, they retain it: and now and then faintly intimating, as in a whisper, that some of the Emperor's decrees are *not just*; and, a few, the better to conceal their subserviency, and gain to themselves the character of independence, will even venture, occasionally, to call him a *tyrant*: with which his Imperial Majesty will not be offended, while they continue faithfully to serve him. For the seizure and confiscation of American vessels under his Rambouillet Decree,—an act of such distinguished atrocity, such a shameless violation of the most obvious rules of justice, as demonstrate the Emperor's utter contempt for the opinion of the world, as well as for the rulers of the American Republic, Mr. Madison made the kindest apology imaginable: "The property of our citizens (says he) was seized under a *misapplica-*



tion of the principle of reprisals, combined with a *misconstruction* of the law of the United States!" when Mr. Madison, perfectly acquainted with the nature and character of the seizure (of which in my last address I gave a description) knew it to be an act of sheer, deliberate villany! that the principle of reprisal had nothing to do with it; and that the law was so plain as to be incapable of misconstruction, in relation to this point. Besides, if the law had appeared in any respect uncertain and doubtful, there was an intelligent American Minister on the spot to explain it, if a right understanding of it had been desired. But such an understanding, a correct construction of the law was not desired. A glaringly false construction alone could furnish the Emperor with his shameless pretence for the seizure. These considerations with those exhibited in the preceding address, show, that it was impossible for Mr. Madison to "anticipate" or "expect" the restoration of the property. Why then did he hazard the making of such a declaration to Congress? On the foundation principle formerly mentioned, and repeated, with some illustrations in this address—the *maintenance of the prejudices of the people in favour of France, as the essential means of maintaining in power the party of which he is at least the ostensible head*. A full and faithful display of the nature and effect of the Rambouillet Decree, would naturally and necessarily have led him to detail the multitude of other acts of France, alike unjust, insulting and injurious to the United States, and their citizens. This, if the people continue under the delusion in which he, with his predecessor and their coadjutors had involved them, would have destroyed his popularity. If such

a display by the President of the United States served to open the eyes of the people, they, thus made sensible of the deceptions which had been practised upon them by the same leaders, would have cast them off; and the cause of democracy might have been ruined. Such a display, therefore, of wholesome truths, by Mr. Madison, was not to be expected. Besides, it would have contradicted the course, and been subversive of the predilections of his whole life, in relation to France. But there was also an immediate object which forbade such a display: it would have deprived him of all apology for accepting the declaration of a *conditional* and *future*, instead of an *actual* repeal of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, and thereby have deprived him of a *pretence* for reviving the Non-intercourse Law against Great Britain. An adjustment of our differences with Great Britain must not take place. The rulers of *republican* France, by intrigues, by threats, by bribery, endeavoured to prevent any amicable treaty between the United States and Great Britain; any treaty which, by enlarging and securing our own commerce, would also benefit her's; and thus pave the way for that return of good will and confidence between the two nations, which should add to the prosperity of both; and when one was fortunately made (that of 1794), France omitted no means to defeat it. And when foiled in this attempt, and afterwards in the choice of a President (Mr. Adams, and not Mr. Jefferson, being elected) she let loose and gave greater scope to her piratical cruizers, "to fleece us of our property [as Joel Barlow said, and he was then in Paris] to a sufficient degree to bring us to our feeling in the only nerve in which it was presumed our sensibility lay, which was

our pecuniary interest \*." By "bringing us to our feeling," Mr. Barlow meant inducing the submission of the government of the United States to France, like many of the powers of Europe, whose cases she cited as examples for us to follow. Fortunately the minds of the great majority of the American people at that time remained alive to national insults and injuries. Resistance took place of the expected submission. The *French* Government was brought to its senses, and abandoned its impudent pretensions and claims. How this high and honourable ground was lost to the United States, may be the subject of future observation. That season of dignity, spirit and independence passed away; and that of submission followed, with all the evils we now experience in its train.

I have mentioned *bribery* as one of the means used by France to gain and establish an influence in the United States; and I have done it on the following grounds:

1. The notorious profligacy of the French Government (to say nothing of what existed under its former monarchy) evinced by its uniform conduct from an early period of the Revolution. The official documents under our own Government, under the hands of our Envoys Pinckney, Marshall, and Gerry, attest that profligacy. Doubtless there are some persons who, to gain an important point, would *offer* a bribe, who would disdain to *receive* one. The Government of France had no scruples of this sort. The Directory, by their minister of corruption Talleyrand, had the consummate baseness and impudence

\* Mr. Barlow's letter of March 1, 1798, to the late A. Baldwin, Esq.

to demand of our Envoys a *douceur* (in English a bribe) of fifty thousand pounds sterling, (upwards of two hundred and twenty thousand dollars) for the pockets of *four* of them; the *fifth* Director, Merlin, who had held the office of *Minister of Justice*, being paid by the owners of privateers, [for being the minister of *iniquity* in directing the decisions of the prize courts, condemning American vessels and their cargoes.] And this bribe they were informed was only the *customary* tribute in diplomatic affairs! And even this *douceur* was not to procure the acknowledgment of our Envoys in the character of public Ministers---but only permission for them to stay in Paris, where those insolent tyrants kept their court.

2. The confidential friend and agent of Talleyrand in this business, (whose information Talleyrand told Mr. Gerry was just, and always might be relied on) in addition to the *douceur* of fifty thousand pounds, earnestly pressed for a loan to the French Republic of many millions of dollars; to have made which would have been a violation of our duty as a neutral nation, and urged various other unwarrantable and insolent demands of the French Government; enforcing them by threats of its vengeance on failure of their compliance. Our Envoys remaining firm and invincible, the confidential agent said to them---“ Perhaps you believe that in returning and exposing to your countrymen the unreasonableness of the demands of this Government, you will unite them in resistance to those demands: you are mistaken: you ought to know that the diplomatic skill of France, and the means she possesses in your country, are sufficient to enable her, with the aid of the French party in America, to throw the blame which will attend the rupture of the negotiations on the federalists, as

you term yourselves, but on the British party, as France terms you; and you may assure yourselves this will be done."

3. The testimony of Fauchet, the Minister of France to the United States, in his famous letter of October 31, 1794; the time of the great insurrection in the western part of Pennsylvania, familiarly known by the name of the Whisky Insurrection. Referring to certain overtures which had been made to him by one of the *exclusive patriots* (whom he named), and which he had before communicated to his Government, Fauchet says, "Thus with some thousands of dollars the republic could have decided on civil war or peace. *Thus the consciences of the pretended patriots of America have already their prices.*"\*

4. The notorious treachery of many officers, civil and military, of the countries which have been overrun by the arms of France; and whose treason can be ascribed to no cause but the distribution of French gold, or the delusive promises of elevation to higher employments and dignities, as in the case of Godoy, the Prince of Peace, who betrayed Spain into the hands of Bonaparte; or to both these causes. Accordingly the opinion is general, that this sort of corruption has been the efficient pioneer to the French armies, and opened their way to conquest.

5. The open avowal of the fact by a French agent, at the time that Adet (the successor of Fauchet) was the French Minister in Philadelphia. This agent was Mr. Letombe, the Consul General of the French republic, a person well known to great numbers of

\* "Ains avec quelque milliers de dollars la Republique aurait decidee sur la guerre civile ou sur la paix. Ains les consciences des pretendus patriots en Amerique ont deja un tarif!"

*Fauchet's French original.*

my fellow citizens, as well as to me. Letombe had previously been French Consul at Boston; had lived some years in the United States, and was doubtless much better informed concerning them than the Minister Adet. Washington was then President of the United States, and probably Letombe perceived that the time had not arrived for France, by her intrigues and bribery to gain an effectual ascendancy in the councils of our nation. Letombe accordingly mentioned the fact in a tone of complaint and vexation. It was to a very intelligent and respectable gentleman of my acquaintance, to whom Letombe said, "that Mr. Adet had foolishly thrown away a great deal of money, in bribing Members of Congress, although they (Letombe and the Minister) were put to much difficulty in raising it; and that they had at great loss to the French Republic in the negotiation, procured eighty or ninety thousand dollars at Boston." I quote from my memorandum made at the time the information was given to me. Mr. Adet's Mission to the United States terminated near the close of the year 1796. Since that time the French Government has found less difficulty in procuring money. The plunder of the world and the mines of Mexico and Peru have been open to them. Eighteen months ago I received satisfactory information that the Frenchman who was then Bonaparte's Consul General in Philadelphia, had in the course of one year received about a million of dollars, for which the French Government could have no legitimate use in the United States; because it then neither derived nor needed any supplies from the United States.

The evidences of corruption, of falsehood, of hypocrisy and deceit, in the men whose official or per-

sonal means and influence have for many years given a direction to the public sentiment, and managed the affairs of the United States, it has been necessary to exhibit to the view of my fellow citizens; because the only hope of political salvation rested on the public conviction that those men did not deserve the confidence of the nation. 'This exposure was anticipated with regret; because (as I early remarked) "in exposing them I should unavoidably expose the nakedness of my country; when, if compatible with truth, I would infinitely rather speak the praises of both." More remains to be told.

**TIMOTHY PICKERING.**

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## STATEMENT.

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THE high price of bullion, and the state of our paper currency, have for some time past been subjects of general interest, and have given rise to much controversy, both in public and in private. They have been so ably and elaborately discussed, in several late publications, that it is with diffidence and hesitation I presume to offer any further observations on these matters. It was the pamphlet of Mr. Ricardo, entitled, "The high price of Bullion a proof of the depreciation of Bank Notes," which first called my attention seriously to the

subject. I saw it in London, in the month of April last. It appeared to me such a paradox, so directly contrary to my own ideas, and so opposed to the common sense and general experience of every man that has a bank note in his pocket, that I had at that time made a few memorandums, with some intention of controverting this gentleman's arguments. Other occupations, however, intervened, and they were laid aside, until I was reminded of them by the publication of the "Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the high price of Gold Bullion, &c." and on perusing it, I observed that the majority of the members seemed fully to assent to the hypothesis of Mr. Ricardo, and, by their questions to the witnesses examined, appeared anxious to prove the truth of it. The publication of Mr. Huskisson's pamphlet

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soon followed. He was one of the members of the commi

dual capacity as an author, argues logically and ably on the same side of the question; and I should almost be afraid of venturing any thing in opposition to such a work, did I not perceive, that the superb edifice rests the whole of its weight on one single point, not very firm, and by the removal of which, it must fall to the ground in a moment. Of other publications, I know no more than what is stated in the Monthly Review (October,) and the authors of that judicious and elegant journal take the same side.

It is therefore with extreme caution that any man should venture to oppose such accumulated authority. I will not pretend to quote or to criticize any par-

ticular passages, but confine my observations to the general doctrine of these authors—that our paper currency, or in other words, the promissory notes of the Bank of England, are depreciated,—an opinion which, if it has not already, may cause some alarm through the country. I do not, however, apprehend, that such an alarm can spread very far. People who read these sort of pamphlets, and think, or fancy they think, deeply on the subject, pretend to see cause for uneasiness; but the generality of the good people of England will never believe, so long as they find a bank note of one pound to be worth twenty shillings, that it is depreciated, in spite of all the abstract and philosophical reasoning to persuade them to the contrary. In this they shew their accustomed plain and good sense; for it is most incontrovertibly true,

(the fact admitted,) that there can be no depreciation real or imaginary; for, the moment a depreciation takes place, let the cause be what it may, it must, and will shew itself in this way and no other. A one pound note would in this case, first, perhaps, be received for nineteen shillings, then for fifteen shillings, and so on. But such a want of credit, I think, cannot possibly arise, so long as we possess any thing like a free constitution, and the actions of those who govern us are subject to investigation and inquiry.

Suspensions have been abundantly set forth, of the conduct of the Bank Directors, of their connivance with his Majesty's ministers, and thus issuing a superabundant quantity of their paper, to supply the wants of government. I am not prepared to deny that such an opera-



tion may have occasionally taken place, to a certain small amount; nor am I prepared to justify them, however rare, or however small the accommodation, so granted, may have been; and I hesitate not to say, that it was a deviation from their duty, were it only for a single £1000. I applaud, however, their prudence and discretion in not having gone farther, so far as applause is due: but I am bold to say, that neither the King's ministers dare to ask, nor the Bank Directors grant, an accommodation of this kind, to any great extent.

Let us suppose, however, for a moment, that the restraints on our government were so far relaxed as to be merely nominal; the parliament, so entirely under the influence of the crown, as that its debates were disregarded; and the peo-

ple so debased and supine; as neither to ask for, or think of reform; and that in such a situation a minister, being in immediate want of so enormous a sum of money as to be afraid of publicly applying to parliament, for fear of rousing the slumbering lion, prevails upon the Bank Directors to fabricate for him, ten millions of their notes, which might not be perceived: this being squandered away, he asks for ten millions more; he would soon arrive at the point where the superabundance must become sensible. From thence the twenty shillings' note would drop to nineteen, and so, step by step, until it came to ten, or five, or even one shilling; but our nominal or imaginary pound sterling, with its aliquot parts, in which we keep our accounts, would remain unaltered; it would hold the same relative value with respect to gold, sil-

ver, copper, corn, sugar, or any other commodity.

I most cordially agree with the Governor, and Deputy Governor of the Bank, that so long as their notes are in demand, and they do not issue them. except in exchange for something which represents actual property, and is convertible into it, within a stated period, they may go on without apprehension to the most unlimited amount. It is when paper money has been fabricated without value having been received for it, that it becomes soon depreciated, and more or less gradual according to circumstances, and at last, in all cases, if not redeemed, must descend to its original nothingness.

If it is really true, that the notes of

the Bank of England are depreciated, there must be something essentially different in our paper currency from that in any other country within my recollection; for the paper first invented in North America, at the commencement of the dispute with the parent state, retained its nominal value for a very short time; a considerable discount was openly allowed upon it, which rapidly increased, till at length 1000 dollars of the paper would not purchase the value of a dinner. Exactly the same thing happened in France during the revolution; assignats were soon subject to a discount, which increased till they were absolutely worth nothing at all. Still, however, the imaginary money of the country, livres, sous, and deniers, continued the same; they bore the same relative value with respect to all other commodities; paper alone was

at first depreciated, lost its credit, and at length became of no value. The same thing has happened in Spain, and in Portugal; the vales reales in the former country have, for many years past, been at a very high discount, fluctuating according to political circumstances; but the reales and maravedies, in which their accounts are kept, have suffered no variation: and it is precisely the same thing in Portugal, as will be shown hereafter. But, before discussing farther this subject of paper currency, I will relate what I recollect of the trade in bullion.

I first became acquainted with the Lisbon trade in 1772. During this and the four following years I resided in London, and received considerable quantities of gold bar, gold dust, and coin, from Lisbon. I generally took it with my own

hands from the bullion office, and frequently attended the refinery of Messrs. Cox and Co. to see the dust melted. Towards the end of the year 1776 I went to Lisbon, where I staid till 1801. During the first eighteen years of this period, I was in the habit of purchasing large quantities of gold bar and dust, and exported it to England in his Majesty's packets and ships of war. This was brought from the Brazils clandestinely, but it was done without much apparent risk, nor was there any great secrecy observed in the purchase of it at Lisbon: it seems as if it had been known to, but winked at by, the government. From the very nature of this trade, it is impossible to procure any exact account; but as the greater portion of it went to the bullion office, the statement of what was received there might be a good ap-

proximation: not however having even that to refer to, I will try to make the best computation in my power.

The five Lisbon packets, stationed at Falmouth, made, upon an average, together twenty-two voyages annually; perhaps four or five ships of war called at Lisbon in the course of a year, and brought gold to England; some was also brought by merchant ships; and I should think that, reckoning thirty voyages at £30,000 each, taking bullion and coin, would be the utmost amount of the gold imported into England from Lisbon, in the twenty years, between 1772 and 1792; and according to the best information I could obtain at that time, and my general idea of the trade, it was the chief supply that Europe received of this precious metal. Soon after the last-mentioned

period, the quantity of gold at the Lisbon market began sensibly to diminish; it continued to fall off gradually. It was reduced to a mere trifle for some years before the emigration of the Prince Regent and the government, and since that epoch the supply from thence has ceased totally and entirely.

Gold, it may be presumed, was brought to England from Africa, from our first communication with that country; the very name of our late current coin the *Guinea* seems to denote, and to prove it. I would compute the quantity, for a great many years back, to have been of the value of £200,000 annually: a small quantity I understand is, or was occasionally, brought from the East Indies. The next source of supply is from Spanish America. I do not recollect having ever



heard that any considerable quantity was imported into England from thence, either through our West Indies, or direct from Spain, during the above-mentioned twenty years from 1772 to 1792; but on inquiry I am informed, that for the last fifteen years the quantity brought, principally through Jamaica, has been considerable, and may be fairly computed of the annual amount of £700,000.

I have supposed, that the whole quantity of gold imported into Europe came through England, which may not be strictly correct; for I recollect, that the French merchant ships trading between Havre de Grace and Lisbon, used occasionally to carry a few hundred pieces of coin direct from the latter to the former port. The French ships trading to the coast of Africa may have carried a small

quantity of gold dust from that continent to France. The Dutch traders to Africa, as also their East Indiamen, may likewise have conveyed a small quantity of gold to Europe. It may however, I think, be fairly computed, that the whole importation from the other three quarters of the globe never could, nor did exceed, the value of two millions of pounds sterling annually.

History informs us, that the gold mines in Brazil became sensibly productive about the commencement of the reign of king John V. of Portugal; and I imagine they arrived at their greatest fertility towards the close of that reign, between the years 1740 and 1750, for I have often heard, soon after I went to Lisbon, the old merchants, both Portuguese and English, describe that period as the golden age of the country.

We will now take a cursory view of the other side of the account, and endeavour, though perhaps very vaguely, to attain an approximation of the quantity of this metal consumed or made use of during the same period. Gold trinkets and ornaments, of every description, have been worn by men and women from time immemorial. The Roman Catholic churches throughout Europe were adorned with a profusion of gilding; gold watches were made in considerable numbers in Paris, Geneva, and some in London; gold snuff-boxes were also highly in vogue; and most of the courts of princes, and many of the nobility, had gold services on their tables, and gold dressing-boxes on their toilets. Still I think, that from about the year 1720 to 1780, the production of the mines was fully equal to the consumption, and

probably the quantity of this precious metal in Europe may have been on the increase; but at or about that time the thing is reversed; the quantity has been gradually decreasing, and for the last few years very rapidly indeed. It has been already shewn, that the supply from the Brazil mines has ceased altogether; and supposing that the other sources continued as they were, they cannot exceed the value of one million sterling per ann. Now an eminent and ingenious watch-maker, resident in this place, informs me, that during his apprenticeship, his master had seldom orders for more than two gold watches at a time; but that the manufacture of gold watches in this country has of late so rapidly increased, that he himself, for several years past, has seldom had less than a hundred and fifty in a progressive state towards finishing; and

that his annual consumption of standard gold for the cases only is one thousand one hundred ounces; and he thinks it may fairly be computed, that this quantity is about one-hundredth part of that used for the same purpose throughout the kingdom; thus making an aggregate, in one article only, of near the value of half a million sterling. If we consider that a manufactory of the same kind is carrying on extensively, and probably with the same increase, at Paris, at Geneva, and many other cities, and that the manufacture of trinkets, ornaments, and gilding is going forwards, in a greater or less degree, throughout Europe, however low the quantity consumed in each place may be computed, there surely cannot be a doubt upon any person's mind, that it far, very far, exceeds the quantity of late years produced

by all the mines in the world. It was, perhaps, about the year 1790, that the scarcity first began to be perceived. In 1797 it became so evident, that the government was under the necessity of restricting the Bank from paying away any more gold, the price being then about eighty-three shillings per ounce. It was called a temporary measure, and supposed to be occasioned by the circumstances of the war. This was the general opinion, and I really believe, that neither the Bank Directors, nor the government itself, knew any better. But the true and real cause was the actual scarcity of the metal, and the virtual effect of the measure was, that of changing the circulating medium of the country from gold to paper, and thus relinquishing the metallic circulation to the general market of Europe; and it has been gradually

taken away, a small part, perhaps, for the circulation of other countries, but chiefly for the use of the manufacturers throughout Europe.

Had our government not taken this step, but, in place of it, allowed the value of guineas to have followed the market price of gold, the metal must have risen much higher than it has done hitherto; a guinea at this time would probably have been worth thirty shillings or upwards of our nominal currency, and an ounce of gold upwards of £6. But this is merely a guess—the advance might have been greater, for it is not easy to imagine the extent to which people will go for a showy and fashionable trinket; and I am persuaded, there is not a man, who wears a gold watch, to whom it is not indifferent, whether the

case of it cost £5 per ounce, or £10 per ounce.

In the foregoing calculation of the quantity of gold consumed in the world, no account is taken of the wear of coins, which is not inconsiderable. Add to this, the actual loss of the metal, which could not have been trifling, in France, during the first years of the revolution, when there was really a scramble for it. Every man got possession of the largest quantity that he could, as being a material of the greatest value, and the smallest bulk. Doubtless many of those persons buried it for safety deep in the ground, and afterwards lost their lives without divulging the secret.

No small portion of the metal, also, must be for ever hidden at the bottom of



the ocean, in consequence of shipwrecks, and of vessels having foundered, or been burnt at sea, within the last fifteen years. I am sensible that on the other side, some allowance ought to be made for the quantity of old gold, re-melted and converted into new articles; but which, from what I can learn, bears a very small proportion to that made use of from bars and foreign coin: and indeed, from the enumerations of the various modes of consumption, they so vastly exceed the actual import, that no reasonable calculation of this kind can bring them to an equality.

Had our government, at the time it restricted the Bank from paying gold, been aware of the real state of the case, and at the same time had had the resolution, I may say, magnanimity, to procure the repeal of all the prohibitory

and penal laws relating to our gold coin, it would have greatly tended to shew the matter in its clear and proper light; and it might have saved all the trouble and expence of the late publications, and particularly the question, &c. stated and examined by Mr. Huskisson, whose hypothesis, as I have before intimated, seems to rest solely on this point, which ought, and, I think, must, in a very short time, be entirely taken away. He says, that the standard price of our gold coinage is fixed by law at £3. 17s. 10½d. per ounce. I would ask, where is the authority that can fix the standard value of any one thing upon the face of this earth? Things have value relative to each other, but no power can subject all the others to an arbitrary value of any one of their fellow things. What king, or what nation, it was that first

thought of fixing a standard value upon its money, it is not here necessary to inquire, but almost all the nations of the world have fallen into the same error, and it has until now been acquiesced in by the generality of mankind. The reason is plain. The supply of the two precious metals, gold and silver, having been nearly equal to the demand, the value of them continued almost stationary for a long series of years, therefore nobody doubted the propriety of thus fixing a standard, and the right was perhaps never questioned. But the principle was just as erroneous, applied to this metal, as if to any other commodity whatever. It is in reality as vain as the attempts of the French government, in the early part of the revolution, to fix a maximum and a minimum upon corn, and other articles of provision. The

difference is, that in the one case it required only the space of a market day to prove the futility of the attempt, and in the other, a series of years. But what else is this fixing of a standard, than making a law of maximum for one particular metal or commodity; for after all it is merely referred to our true and only standard, pounds, shillings, and pence. The law says, it shall be worth no more, nor no less, than £3. 17s. 10½d. per ounce; but, the people say, it shall be worth more, and they prevail: and if in place of mines being exhausted, an inexhaustible new one had been discovered, the people would have said it shall be worth less; the price would have fallen in spite of the law, and our pounds, shillings, and pence, remained in statu quo.

The present state of things removes the delusion, and proves that these two celebrated metals can have no more value, commonly called intrinsic, than a bushel of corn, or a cwt. of sugar, and that they will be sold for no less, nor fetch any more, than the market price of the day, regulated by their respective scarcity or abundance, although a hundred laws were made to prevent it.

Gold has been called the most precious of metals, and I am not disposed to dispute its pretensions: it is, however, universally admitted, not to be the most useful, and the purposes to which it is applied are chiefly for splendor and ostentation. But mankind seem to have attached to it an idea of something supernatural, and such has been the anxious

desire, the pride, amongst nations, to hold it in possession, that there is hardly one that has not freely opened its gates to the admission, and rigorously prohibited the exportation of it, by the most positive laws, and under the severest penalties. Even the Portuguese, though proprietors of the mines, and therefore obviously their interest to produce as much, and sell as much, as possible, have fallen into this error. The Spaniards too, as owners of the mines of the less valuable metal, silver, are guilty of the same egregious mistake. As well might the Emperor of Germany have prohibited the exportation of quicksilver, Sweden its metals, or our own legislature forbid us sending abroad our iron, our copper, or our tin.

All the writers on political economy have likewise drawn a line of demarca-

tion between these two metals and all the other productions of the earth, and have called them distinctively the balance of trade; as if a balance paid over in these two metals was of more intrinsic value than if it had been paid in iron, in copper, or in corn. It never can be supposed, that any nation will continue long to send to another nation a larger amount of commodities than it receives, or expects to receive, within a limited time. It is said that the balance of trade is in favour of a country when the amount of commodities entered outwards at its custom-houses, is greater than those entered inwards, and a conclusion is drawn, that the balance has been received in gold and silver; but this can never be ascertained, the exportation in most countries being absolutely prohibited. It might be difficult to keep an

exact account under any circumstances, but these laws have rendered it quite impossible, and throw a mystery over a transaction that would, otherwise, be as plain as any other operation of commerce.

In our public documents a pompous statement is set forth, of the magnitude of our exports compared with the imports. If the balance had been brought into the country in gold and silver, we might have lined the inside of our palaces, perhaps shod our horses, and 'tired our chariot wheels, with these brilliant materials! But in those statements I have never observed any allowance for the numerous captures of our ships by the enemy, or of the losses by accidents at sea, all of which are insured in England, and consequently become an absolute annihi-



lation of so much property belonging to the country, and should be deducted from the balance. Add to this, the immense loss upon our late exportations to the North of Europe and South America, by which so many of our merchants have lately been ruined. These, if taken together, and fairly calculated, would, I apprehend, nearly, if not totally, absorb this pompous, but delusive balance.

Nations may, and I think ought, to fix in the most permanent manner possible a standard weight, and a standard measure, and if they could communicate with each other, and make these standards universal, it would be a vast convenience to the whole of mankind; but, as I said before, they cannot fix a standard value upon any thing: the attempt is vain and foolish; it is a contradiction

in terms, and incompatible with the general order of nature.

If I am right in this assertion, what then, I may be asked, are we to make use of as money? What are we to do for a circulating medium? I answer, go on as you are; your circulating medium is merely imaginary; you have no such thing as pounds in actual existence, but you have an ideal pound, with its aliquot parts, in which you keep your accounts, and which avoids the inconvenience of absolute barter, and fully answers the purpose. It would be of no consequence were we to give those pounds any other denomination, or even if we made use of figures without giving them any other name than one, two, three, &c. Let us suppose, that metal never had, and was not now, made use of as

money, and I have a pound of tea, and wish to exchange it with my next door neighbour for a pound of sugar; but according to the market price of these two articles, one pound of tea is equal to five pounds of sugar. I receive from him the pound of sugar, and a bit of paper, with the number four, and his mark upon it, and the account is settled. So long as he continues my neighbour, and is solvent, his mark is sufficient, and I can pay it to another neighbour for a commodity worth four, relation had to the other two. But men change their places of abode; in their general traffic some gain, others lose, and many become insolvent. Aware of this, I am not so well satisfied with the mark of an individual, as I should be with the stamp of a company of opulent men, whose office is fixed and permanent. Thus we may

imagine the origin of bank and bankers' notes, and if any man is doubtful of the solvency of this paper, and wishes to keep his property in as small a compass as possible, let him purchase gold; he will still find it in the market at the market price, and it appears to me a promising speculation. This is the plain ground-work of our paper circulation, and so long as the authority of government, and the solvency of the Bank, and the general credit of bankers, continue, the machine goes smoothly round.

Still, however, it must be admitted, that the system is not fixed upon a basis absolutely unmoveable. The successful invasion of a savage enemy, the total overthrow of the government, the plunder and destruction of the Bank itself, with the dispersion of the directors and

their officers, would certainly cause a most dreadful confusion, and incalculable inconvenience, to all ranks of people, particularly amongst the middling classes. Many also would be totally ruined ; but the anarchy occasioned by such a dreadful catastrophe could not, from the nature of things, be of long duration ; and on the restoration of order, those persons possessed of actual property would immediately make it available for all their wants by actual barter, until some means were found of facilitating the exchange of commodities. Now it must be confessed, that if gold was in abundance, and that in place of paper it had been made use of as the circulating medium, so horrible a crisis would occasion much less individual distress and inconvenience. If, at the moment it happened a man had £50 of bank notes in his pocket, it

would be changed instantly into waste paper, and he must look about for some other species of property that he could barter for his next dinner. If, in place of bank notes, he had the value of £50 in gold and silver, the difference of his situation need not be pointed out. It might last him till the restoration of order, and he might have felt very little personal distress or inconvenience from such a subversion. But, however desirable it might be (and I do not deny that it is desirable) to bring back a part, at least, of our circulating medium to gold, we have gone so far, that it appears to me next to impracticable under our existing laws: and nothing surely can be so childish as the proposal of the bullion committee, to force the Bank to pay its notes in gold at the rate of £3. 17s. 10½d. per ounce, when the real

value and actual price is '£4. 12s. 'per ounce. It would be the same as to say, " This ~~to~~ to give notice, that we, the government of Great Britain, at the end of two years from the date hereof, will sell gold or silver at twenty per cent. less than its value, and will raise a tax upon our subjects to pay the deficiency." But the folly and absurdity of such a measure will appear more glaring by a reference to the appendix to the report itself, No. 27, page 37 ; by which it appears, that in the year 1794 the whole produce of the gold mines of Spanish America amounted to 40,000 marks, and of the mines of Brazil to 20,000 marks. The former may be perfectly correct for any thing I know ; the latter may be correct also, excluding the contraband trade. They make together 60,000 marks as I understand, of about eight ounces

avoirdupoise each mark; this reduced into pounds troy, and calculating at our standard of  $44\frac{1}{2}$  guineas per pound, would make, in round numbers, about 1,700,000 guineas. Supposing, therefore, that the produce of the mines had not diminished since that time, and that we had the power of appropriating the whole of it exclusively to our purpose, it would require full twelve years to replace by gold the bank notes in circulation. I know nothing of the Spanish mines, but I know that the mines in Brazil are very nearly, if not entirely, exhausted; and I know that the miners, unwilling, like men in every other department of life, to change their habits and occupation, went on working in this unprofitable pursuit, until they found their slaves upon an average did not earn for them more than 50 reis, or about  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. each



per day, which at length forced them to relinquish it. They now, I am informed, cultivate cotton upon the surface, and bring it down to sell at the Rio de Janeiro on the backs of mules and horses. This being the true state of things, shews the proposal of the gentlemen of the committee almost beyond imagination trifling and ridiculous.

There cannot be a doubt, but that the bowels of the earth, in that richest and finest part of it called Brazil, contain gold in abundance. It is the blind, narrow, foolish policy of the government that prevents its extraction. All the laws for the regulation of the mines are absurd and injurious. In the first place, one-fifth of the gross produce is exacted as a duty: this might be afforded so long as the metal was found near the surface; but

when great labour has been employed in digging deep, and even turning the course of rivers, for the purpose of exploring their former beds, the tax becomes exorbitant. And of their regulations, it will be sufficient to mention one: when a gold mine is opened, although the miner be successful in discovering a rich and abundant vein of the metal, should one of the slaves by chance find a single diamond, and that comes to the knowledge of the government, the excavation is immediately filled up, the ground taken possession of by a guard of soldiers, and the labour of the miner entirely lost.

The government itself must have been sensible of the diminution of the produce of the mines for a long time past, though it never became a subject of general conversation, or even of much public

remark. But I well recollect having met with a Portuguese gentleman, in Lisbon, some fourteen or fifteen years ago, who was then just returned from a long and extensive tour through all the mining countries in Europe; it was undertaken for the express purpose of instructing himself in the different modes of procuring, smelting, and treating the metals. His journey was at the expence of the government, with the direct view of appointing him to the superintendence of one of the districts in the Brazils; and in the expectation, that by means of his knowledge and acquirements, the produce of the mines might be increased. He was so appointed, and sailed for his destination, but I never heard any thing of his endeavours or of his success. He appeared to me, as far as I could judge, to be a very able mineralogist, well-

informed upon every subject connected with that science, and a very ingenious and clever man; and that it was impossible to have chosen a fitter person for such an important mission. He has probably been counteracted, and his exertions rendered fruitless, by some private interest, jealousy, or court intrigue.

As to the general assertion of the authors before alluded to, that bank notes are depreciated because bullion is at a high price, the text and title of Mr. Ricardo's pamphlet, which all his followers stick to very closely,—as well might it have been said, that bank notes bear a premium, because any other article is plentiful and cheap. The celebrated Dr. Adam Smith, whose *Wealth of Nations* I recollect reading when a very young man, lays it down as an axiom, that an

over-abundance of money causes the price of every other article to rise; but this has always appeared to me somewhat problematical. It may be true, regard had to the existing laws relative to our coin, because if by its decrees, a government can compel us to take a coinage of gold, for every thing we sell at the rate of £3. 17s. 10½d. per ounce, gold in the general market of Europe, not being worth more than £3. and could force upon us a superabundance of this over-valued coin, other things would appear cheap compared with it. But in the natural order of things the axiom is not true. Clear away from the question this rubbish of the law, and the falsity of the position stares you in the face. The gold in this case, would immediately fall to its natural market price. If in like manner a government endeavours to force upon

us a superabundance of paper, exactly the same thing will happen. It will fall to a discount, which will virtually lessen its quantity; so that there can never be any such thing as a superabundance of money in a country. If you fabricate a piece of paper, and call it 20, when 15 only was necessary, it will stand for 15, and no more. If you double the quantity that was necessary, it will count for 10, and so on. If government would but let things alone that do not naturally belong to them, it would save an immensity of trouble, both of thinking, and of writing.

Bank notes are said to be depreciated. Let us suppose a case, however ludicrous, of a person being absent from the kingdom, for the last eleven or twelve years. On landing, this is the first information he receives, and on his arrival in London,

he thinks proper to buy a quantity of gold. He applies to Mr. Goldsmid, who tells him he must pay for it in bank notes at the rate of £4. 12s. per ounce; he is immediately convinced what he had heard was true, as the same sum in bank notes, he finds, will not now buy the same quantity of gold as it would have done in 1799. He next thinks it to his advantage to buy some lead, and some tin. He is required to pay £34. per ton for the former, and £8. 14s. per cwt. for the latter. "Good God," he exclaims, "Bank notes are dreadfully depreciated indeed: when I left England, in the beginning of the year 1799, I could have bought lead for £20. per ton. and tin for less than £5 per cwt." He next thinks of making a speculation in butter, and finds the price £7. per cwt. when he had left it at £4. and he makes the same

exclamation. After this, he turns his attention to tea, and, inquiring the price at the India House, finds that of middling hysson, without the duty, to be 5s. 3d. per pound. "Come, come," says he, "I recollect when I went away, the price was 5s. 2d." Bank notes, with respect to this article, seem to have suffered very little. From tea, it is a very natural transition to sugar. Here he finds the price for middling brown Jamaica to be £3. 14s., and recollects eleven years ago, that he could not buy the same quality for £4. "This is well," says he, "my bank notes here bear a small premium." From brown sugar, it is not unnatural that his attention should be called to coffee, which he recollects to have left at the price of £8. 10s. per cwt.; and conceive his astonishment, when he is asked for it only £4. "Better and better," he exclaims,



“ this is a premium, with a vengeance—my one pound notes are worth more than my two pound notes were in the year 1799.” Cotton is a very important article in this town of Liverpool, so I shall venture to take my new comer into that market. He finds he can buy the best Brazil cotton at 2s. per pound ; when before he left England it would have cost him 3s. ; and a still greater difference in that from Georgia, which then was quoted at 2s. 8d. per pound, and now may be had for 1s. There is besides, iron, the hardest and most useful of all the metals, of which the consumption has most undoubtedly increased, and is increasing throughout the world ; it is now, to speak in plain terms, cheaper than it was in the year 1799\*, by £3. or £4. per ton ; and the reason is, that the produce

\* Prince's Prices Current, January 1799.

of the mines has not only kept pace with, but rather overtaken, this immense consumption. This list might be swelled to an indefinite length, if these examples were not sufficient. But I have often said in conversation, and now do not hesitate to repeat, that if any single article could be found, which bore the same price twenty or ten years ago that it does now, in relation to our nominal currency, this celebrated position, that a superabundance of money causes a rise in the price of all commodities, falls to the ground.

To elucidate farther the futility of attempting to fix a standard value upon any kind of metal, our own beautiful copper coinage, executed some years ago by the late celebrated Mr. Boulton of Birmingham, maybe brought as an instance; the penny pieces, were ingeniously con-

trived to be exactly of the weight of an ounce, and the diameter of an inch ; thus publishing to every corner of the kingdom the national standard weight, and standard measure ; but what became of the standard value of a penny per ounce ? The metal, called copper, soon afterwards rose in price to the value of 22d. per pound, and pence and halfpence standard weight, standard measure, unfortunately connected with standard value, vanished altogether in a moment.



What seems to me to have misled Dr. Smith, and nearly all the political economists who have followed him, is, that their attention has been almost exclusively fixed upon the price of corn and the price of labour, without attending to other articles. That these two have risen to an extraordinary height is most un

questionable. I am old enough to recollect English wheat exportable, and actually exported, under 40s. per quarter. Soon after that time it was that our manufactures began sensibly to increase and extend, particularly those in cotton, and our exports gradually to swell to an unprecedented amount. Our population at the same time increased very fast; and in general being easy in their circumstances, called for an additional supply of fat beef and mutton. The prices of these articles naturally advanced, and our farmers soon found it to their advantage to lay down their most fertile corn-fields into grass, for the purpose of fattening cattle. This naturally brought on a scarcity of grain, which was necessarily followed by a rising price; and as the country could not supply both articles in sufficient abundance, it was very natural that of the two, corn

being the most portable, should be brought from foreign countries, and it is now more than double the price that it was forty years ago. In this situation the price of labour must unavoidably be advanced, for the man who has nothing but the work of his hands to depend upon, must receive payment sufficient to subsist himself and his family—the alternative is famine and death, or insurrection and pillage. These two great and principal articles are, therefore, considerably enhanced in price, but they are no more so in relation to gold and silver, or to our imaginary pounds sterling, than is lead or tin; and were our population to decrease, and our supply of provisions continue the same, they would fall in price like coffee or cotton, our imaginary pounds sterling continuing always the same.

What, in my opinion, puzzles every body, and renders people's ideas so very confused upon these subjects, is the multiplicity and complication of our laws upon all those matters; and I most cordially agree with Dr. Smith, in his opinion, that Great Britain has flourished not by means, but in despite, of its commercial regulations; and it is truly astonishing how it is possible that the business of the country can be carried on under such a system. The number, the incongruity, confusion, contradiction of the laws, the forms of the Custom-houses, require almost as much study and attention in a merchant's clerk, as a solicitor in the courts at Westminster-hall. The delays occasioned by the smallest informality, are almost inconceivable, and it is only by the most persevering industry, and unconquerable love of gain, that the

mercantile classes of this country are enabled to overcome the many thousand unnecessary obstacles that government has thrown in their way.

It has been already admitted, that it might be desirable to retain a given quantity of gold in this country, as a circulating medium; but the question is, how is it to be effected? If government were to insist in obliging the Bank to buy at the market price, and issue it at the rate of £3. 17s. 10½d. per ounce, the guineas would be melted as fast as they were issued; and although no more gold were to come to Europe, they would go into the crucible, and from thence to the Bullion-office several times a year; and it would require the whole amount of the war-taxes to support this quick circulation, to the enormous emolument of those

who had the courage to bid defiance to the law.

It seems the summit of vanity to intrude any speculation of mine as to a remedy for an evil of such magnitude. I do it, however, with humility, and it is the only mode that occurs to me of accomplishing this great object. Perhaps the operation might be conveniently deferred till the conclusion of a peace; but I see no objection to commence putting the plan in execution immediately.

My proposal, then, is, that the Directors of the Bank should be instructed to purchase gold at the market price, wherever it can be found, and when they have acquired what may be thought a sufficient quantity, let the government order a new coinage, which may be issued as soon as



it is ready, were it only to a small amount, premising the repeal of all the laws, of what nature soever, relating to the coin. Let the new pieces be of a certain weight, of the standard fineness, without any limit as to their value. Suppose each piece to be exactly a quarter of an ounce, and let the value fluctuate according to the market price of the metal. The gold-brokers' weekly list of the prices would be a sufficient intimation of its value to all parts of the kingdom. It is probable that the price would rise, but the advance might be very gradual, and if there is any considerable quantity floating in Europe, it might be brought back. In the end, such an operation might encourage the miners to resume their work ; or some arrangement might be made with the government of Brazil to relieve and encourage them, and thus bring forwards a

supply adequate to the consumption. There might also be a penalty for counterfeiting this new species of coin, proportioned to the offence, and heavier as the counterfeit was proved of more or less weight and fineness. Let us suppose that the issue of these pieces began at the rate of £5. an ounce, and that soon afterwards the value of gold rose to such a price in France, or in Germany, as to induce the exportation of them; the natural consequence would be, as soon as ever the scarcity began to be perceived, a proportionate rise of the price here would take place, and we should have them returned to us as fast as they had gone out.

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I have already alluded to the currency of Portugal, but perhaps a more particular account of it may be the best explanation of my ideas of a nominal, or ima-

ginary circulating medium. It has always appeared to me, that the Portuguese mode of managing these matters, and keeping their accounts, was by far the most rational and sensible of any nation of the world. It is all in decimals, the units being called a *rei*, in English, king, about fifteen of which are equal to the value of our penny, and there is no other proper denomination of money whatever. The old gold coin, it is true, bore the name of *a moeda de ouro*, which we translate *moidore*, in French *monnoir d'or*, meaning, merely a piece of gold money. But the principal, and best part of the coin, originated with John V. that of the 36s. piece, or half-joe, which is of the weight of exactly half an ounce Portuguese, and never bore any other name than the number of *reis*, of which by law it represented the value, as *huma peça de*

*seis mil quatro centos* ; in English, a piece of six thousand four hundred reis, and so throughout all its aliquot parts. The standard, or fixed value of the gold, by the laws of Portugal, was 12,000 reis per ounce ; the  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce, therefore, was worth 6000 reis, and the 400 reis was the king's seignorage for the expence of coining. Now the exportation of this beautiful coinage having been a regular, though a forbidden trade, from the very time of its origin, and by the diminution of the produce of the mines, the government having been deprived of its filths, the operations of the mints, both in Brazil and in Portugal, became nearly suspended. The drain continued unceasingly, the royal coffers were consequently soon found empty, and the source of supply almost dried up. In this predicament, it looked around for ways and means, and in place

of resorting to those usual in similar cases of distress, the imposition of duties, taxes, &c. it hit upon the expedient of fabricating and issuing a paper money; and so easy did this way of coining appear to the treasurer and his officers, that they sent it forth in payment of the debts of government, not only without limit to its quantity, but without taking any account of it whatever; the consequence was, as might be expected, it soon fell to a discount, gradually increasing to between 20 and 30 per cent.

At the time of the emigration of the Prince Regent, the discount rose, I believe, to something more than 40 per cent. which, I understand, is now again reduced to about 27 per cent.

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That it should still be worth any thing

at all, is truly surprising, for there does not appear a possibility of its ever being redeemed; and although it does nominally bear an interest, there is very little probability that it can ever be consolidated into any sort of stock, on which interest will actually be paid.

Since the emigration, however, the manufactory of it has stopped, the quantity does not increase; something is absolutely necessary, and this, together with a considerable amount of Portuguese silver and copper coin, a great proportion of dollars, and a trifling remainder of the small aliquot parts of the gold coin, now forms the circulating medium of the country.

The larger gold money, both moidores and the pieces of six thousand four hun-

dred reis, have totally disappeared. Notwithstanding this, the fluctuation of the paper, the introduction of foreign money, a rei is still a rei, its value has not increased, nor has it suffered diminution; it is an imaginary being, but it answers all the purposes of a medium of exchange of one commodity for another, in these brazen times, as well as it did in the golden age of John V.; and so it would be in England, were we unhappily labouring under the same calamities. A pound would still be a pound; although, from the high price of gold, a guinea was to be worth 30s. or from the low price, not more than 15s. and the same thing would happen with respect to bank notes. If they were depreciated, the depreciation would be plain and evident, and would be rated by a discount of so much per cent.; or a note of £ 20s. would be said to

be worth 19, 18, or 16s. still our books and accompts would be kept in pounds sterling, and by their imaginary value every thing else would be estimated.

Since writing thus far, I have seen the last number of the Monthly Review, containing the critique on the Report of the Bullion Committee, and of a pamphlet, written by the Right Hon. Sir John Sinclair, Bart. entitled, "Observations on the Report," &c. The pamphlet itself I have not seen, and it is possible it may have anticipated some of the foregoing observations. The Reviewers say, that "no actual scarcity of bullion has existed, either here or on the Continent;" but surely the high price of an article is a sufficient proof of its scarcity. I speak generally of Europe, as being the market for the article, and not of this country



only, " and that it is to be obtained by all who will pay the market price for it ;" but I doubt if it could be had in abundance at any price whatever.

As a proof of the great importation lately, the Reviewers refer to an account, No. 8, in the Appendix to the Report, which, they say, shows that from the 1st January, 1809, to the 30th March, 1810, it amounts to no less than two millions and a half. Now this is the very document to which I would refer, for the proof of an extraordinary diminutive importation; for of these two millions and a half, I find only £520,000 was of gold, and the remainder £1,970,000. was of silver. I have before shown, that this whole importation of gold, during fifteen months, is not equal to our consumption in watch-cases only; and it is generally

computed, that the consumption of silver by the silversmiths of this country exceeds ten thousand ounces a-day, or upwards of a million sterling per annum; so that there remains but one million sterling for all the other silversmiths in Europe; and as to gold, after our watch-makers have taken their proportion, not a single ounce will be left, either for our own goldsmiths, or any body else.

I have purposely avoided speaking of the exchanges between the different countries of Europe, not thinking them of any importance, or at all applicable to the present discussion. I repeat, that I consider Europe as the mart for the gold produced in Asia, Africa, and America; and were the countries of which it is composed at peace with each other, there is hardly a doubt that the price of gold in

any one of them, would not exceed that in any other of them, more than the expence of conveyance, and a very small profit. The present monstrous and unnatural state of the Continent, in consequence of the war, has caused such confusion in the exchange both of monies and commodities, as to render any investigation of those subjects excessively difficult and complicated; and it is only by setting them entirely aside, and supposing a state of tranquillity, that the subject can be rendered tolerably clear.

The author of this pamphlet is sensible that it may be found very defective. Critics are unwilling to accept of apologies. They may say, before its appearance in public, it ought to be revised, corrected, better arranged, re-written; but truly he has not time for all this.

He has put down his thoughts, during a few vacant hours, as they occurred, and sends them to the press with very little alteration. They differ so much from any thing he has seen hitherto published on the same subjects, that he feels it a duty to give them to the world, crude as they are. Should they induce persons of greater ability, and who have more leisure and opportunity for research, to adopt his way of thinking; and if by following this path the real truth should at length be discovered; he will feel himself highly gratified, and amply rewarded.

LIVERPOOL,  
1st December, 1810.



## POSTSCRIPT.

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SINCE this little work was sent to the press, I have procured the second edition of Mr. Bosanquet's "Practical Observations," which I could not do sooner; and I have read Mr. Lyne's "Letter to Mr. Rose." Both these pamphlets contain many acute and sensible remarks, and the authors are able advocates in the same cause with myself. They both lay considerable stress upon the state of the exchanges, between the different countries of Europe, which I am persuaded hardly any man in this country can comprehend, with the exception of a few merchants in London, and three or four

Jew-brokers they employ in these operations; and I am quite convinced have no relation whatever to the matter in discussion. Mr. Lyne sums up his argument by asserting, that there is no depreciation of bank notes, and that the rise or fall in the price of gold has no reference to the comparative value between bank notes and any other article; in which I most cordially agree, however we may differ in the manner of proving it.

Mr. Bosanquet combats at great length, with much ingenuity, and I think with success, the arguments of the Bullion Committee, and also those of Mr. Ricardo; but he submits to the law that would fix a standard upon one metal, to regulate the prices of every thing else. This law I venture to set aside, as one of those, with which any legislator may

amuse himself in making, but which no power can enforce for any length of time.

It appears to me, that the authors, whose works I have yet seen, take up the question too recently, and somewhat superficially. Their reasoning is founded upon the effect of the scarcity of gold, which did not become sensible till the Bank was restricted in its payments. They do not advert to the real cause, which was more remote. I have endeavoured to point it out; it has been gradual in its operation, and perhaps very few people have had such opportunities of seeing and observing its progress as myself. So prevalent has the idea become, of our money being depreciated, that in a printed letter I have just received, from the president of an institution here, relating to the inade-



quacy of its finances, he says " This difficulty the committee has long anticipated, and has been most anxiously solicitous to have obviated; but the rapid depreciation of money, and the increase in the price of every article of consumption," &c. &c. I have little fault to find with the latter part of this sentence; the articles of common consumption are, in general, at a higher price than they were ten or fifteen years ago: the rise in many of them, however, is no more than the quantum of additional duty laid upon them by government since that time; tea, sugar, candles, soap, may all be quoted as examples; therefore money, with respect to their value, call it intrinsic, or by any other name, is not depreciated: the same sum goes out of a family now, as it did twenty years ago, for the actual purchase

of such articles; the additional price is the contribution paid to government, surcharged with the excessive expence of collection in this round-about way. But how the idea, expressed in the former part of it, could have been adopted, after reflection, by a committee of sensible men, is to me quite surprising: a moment's consideration seems sufficient to convince a person of common understanding, that there never was, nor ever can be, any such thing as a depreciation of money; that is, of the denomination of the figures in which the books and accòmpts of any country are kept.—“What,” says a friend, “will you not allow that money is depreciated since the time of Queen Elizabeth?” I answer, “No;” for although a common fowl might then be bought for eightpence,

and a goose for 1s. 4d\*, I find that a beaver hat was at the same time worth 40s.; and it only proves, that there are more eaters of geese in proportion to the number at market, and fewer wearers of beaver hats in proportion to the number in the shops, than there were then; but the pounds, shillings, and pence, are exactly the same, whether in relation to gold or to silver, to hats or to geese. What was the cost of Queen Elizabeth's pair of black silk stockings, I have not been able to ascertain; probably ten times as much as a better pair would cost towards the close of the reign of our most gracious Sovereign. There can be no doubt, that the greater number of the necessaries of life are much dearer (perhaps fourfold) now, than they were in

\* Andrews' Continuation of Henry's History of England.

those times; but there are also many that are much cheaper: glass may be mentioned as one; and every species of woollen, linen, and cotton cloth, as so many others; and if there is a depreciation of money on the one side, there is an enhancement of its value on the other, which is a contradiction in terms, and clearly proves, that there is neither one nor the other; but that the money, in which our accompts are kept, is invariable in its value, and that articles of consumption, are dear or cheap, in the common acceptation of these two words, according to their scarcity or abundance.

My delay in going to press has given me time to look into a Portuguese book, which I did not before recollect was in my possession, called "The Practical Directory for Silver and Gold," by Anto-

nio da Silva, assay master of the mint,  
 and silversmith in Lisbon, printed in  
 1771. It principally consists of tables  
 respecting the quantity of alloy necessary  
 to make silver and gold of all the dif-  
 ferent standard finenesses. The author  
 says, that " the silver money in Portugal  
 " is now, and always was, of the standard  
 " of eleven penny-weights; and that al-  
 " though the price of silver has varied at  
 " different times, the law has been con-  
 " stantly the same, at the rate of six mil-  
 " reis per ounce; and that the king Don  
 " Peter II. so confirmed it by a law of  
 " the 4th August, 1688. In the same  
 " law it is declared, that it being neces-  
 " sary the intrinsic value of gold should  
 " be equalized with that of silver, pro-  
 " portioning the eleven penny-weights of  
 " silver to the 22 carats of gold, the  
 " mint in this city [Lisbon] and in

“ Oporto, shall pay for the mark of gold  
 “ ninety-six milreis,” thus making the  
 proportion between the two metals six-  
 teen for one. 96,000 reis, at the par of  
 exchange of  $67\frac{1}{2}$ , make £27. and were  
 coined into 16 pieces of half an ounce  
 each; valued, including the seignorage,  
 at 6400 reis each, making 102,400 reis;  
 which at the same exchange is £28. 16s.  
 and weighing 9 dwts. 6 grs. Troy weight,  
 comes to exactly the same sum; so that  
 our standard value of gold is fixed by  
 that of the Portuguese, allowing the  
 king’s seignorage. It is truly surprising,  
 that the real value of both the metals  
 should have continued to coincide with  
 that fixed by the law, during a whole  
 century; for it was not till about the  
 year 1790, that the scarcity of gold be-  
 gan to be felt, and the price to rise.

The perusal of this book induced me to look into one of our own Encyclopædias, in which I find, under the article Money, a long dissertation, which might have been spared, had government never thought of fixing a standard value upon the coin. It is there said, that in the reign of William the Conqueror, a pound was understood to mean a pound of silver, or about three pounds of our present money of account; this may have been so, but it is involved in much obscurity. What is more to our purpose is, that it appears, that when the guinea was first struck, it was intended to be current at 20s. but was found to be worth more, and left to seek its own price in the market, and was soon rated at 21s.; but in the year 1728, the government interfered, and it was ordered to pass cur-

rent in all payments at 21s. This was a very great error, and truly unfortunate; for had guineas been left to seek their own price to the present day, they might, it is true, have been worth 30s.; but we should have had them jingling in our purses, and glittering between our fingers, instead of the ragged, greasy, offensive bank notes, now current in this part of the country.

THE END.





## ADDITIONS.

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SINCE the publication of the first edition of this Statement, a pamphlet, containing Letters from Mr. Hill to Mr. Thompson, one of the Bullion Committee, was recommended to my attention, and by the perusal of which, many of the following observations have been suggested. At the moment they were going to the press, another pamphlet made its appearance, entitled "Observations on the Report," &c. &c. by Edward Thornton, Esq. late his Majesty's Minister in Sweden; and I am glad to find, that this very elegant and learned little work advocates the same cause: but Mr. Thornton's ar-

guments rest upon the old positions and generally received theories, and therefore do not require, in this place, any further notice. Mr. Hill, I hope, will excuse the reference I make to his remarks, as they seem to open an opportunity of elucidating my own principles, better, perhaps, than I could do by originating this additional matter myself.

The Bullion Committee adopt the opinion, that the high price is occasioned by the excessive issue of bank notes; but Mr. Hill says, (page 41) that “so far from considering this scarcity as the result of an excessive issue, it is the only circumstance which has prevented the scarcity of the precious metals from being sooner and more severely felt, and from producing a ruinous embarrassment in the pecuniary concerns of the nation.” Now

I am far from thinking, that the restriction of the issue of bank notes would produce any other than a temporary embarrassment: the effect would be to throw this very profitable business into the hands of the London bankers, who would soon take it up, and accommodate the commerce of the metropolis with as large an amount of their own notes, as would be sufficient for every purpose. I recollect the notes of the house of Child and Co. as common and as current as those of the Bank of England; and there are many houses now of equally high credit.

Mr. Hill says, that we sent five millions of guineas to North America, to pay the expenses of our army there, during the war, which may be true; but they must have been brought back again soon after

the conclusion of peace, for there are none there now; and I well remember the newspapers having remarked on the quantity of guineas arriving from America, both in packets and private merchant ships. He also mentions the very large amount sent lately to the Continent to pay our subsidies to foreign princes, and for the support of our armies in Flanders, &c. These, or by far the greater part of them, have probably been melted and used by the watchmakers and goldsmiths at Amsterdam and at Hamburgh, at Paris, at Vienna and at Geneva, for I cannot hear of any such thing as an English guinea being now in circulation in any country of Europe: nor can I learn, that there is now more gold in circulation of their own respective coins in those countries than there was twenty or thirty years ago. In France, at all times, gold

formed a very small part of their circulating medium ; it never constituted any portion of payments in matters of commerce ; and I have heard it frequently remarked by travellers, long before the revolution, that if they had a credit for the value of £100, and they could obtain, in part payment, fifteen or twenty louis d'ors, it was considered a great favour ; the remainder was received in silver crowns : and from the report of persons who have lately been in France, it does not appear that the gold Napoleons are at all in greater plenty. I am therefore the more persuaded, that the specie we sent abroad, for the purposes before mentioned, has been the chief supply of the manufacturers in gold, and has so far prevented any excessive rise in the price.

Mr. Hill's calculation of the amount of foreign gold coined into guineas, from 1784 to 1792 inclusive, being 7 millions, or about eight hundred thousand pounds annually, is probably pretty correct: I have computed the importation of gold from Lisbon at about one million, about two hundred thousand pounds from Africa; and, if we allow four hundred thousand pounds from the Spanish colonies and other parts, it would appear, that about half the import was coined into guineas, and the other half made use of by the watchmakers, goldsmiths, gilders, &c. But from the information I can obtain, the extraordinarily increasing demand for gold watches has arisen from the last mentioned year, and it has been principally for the use of the immense population lately started up in North America. There is hardly a master

of an American merchant ship, that is not in possession of a handsome gold watch, and many of them of very valuable time keepers, for the purpose of navigation. But the diffusion of gold watches is by no means confined to North America; many people in this country, who never thought of inquiring the hour of the day but from the parish church clock, now display a gold watch; they are not uncommon in the pockets of the upper servants of our nobility and gentry; not only the men, but even the women servants, it is well known, can afford to give ten or fifteen guineas for a gold watch. The consumption of this precious metal is very great in the china manufactories; the quantity used in gilding silver plate is also considerable; and a gentleman, very much conversant both in this trade, and that of a gold and



silversmith, computes the amount used in gilding only, in the British dominions, at no less a sum than £200,000 annually. I have likewise, since the publication of my first edition, made further inquiries as to the proportion of old gold used in new works, and am informed it is so trifling as not to be worth any attention; can we then wonder that the metal has become scarce, without recurring to balance of payment, unfavourable exchanges, &c.? In the same letter from Mr. Hill to Mr. Thompson, page 46, there is a curious account taken from Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, by which it appears that the amount of cash and bullion in the possession of the bank, at the time it suspended its payments, was only £1,270,000; this is a very small sum indeed, and if true, would be hardly sufficient to commence the execution of my plan for pay-

ing in gold, not even for the substitution of it in place of the dirty little notes under £5 ; for the more I reflect, the more I am disposed to doubt that the sum of four or five millions, which would be necessary, could be found floating, and capable of being collected in Europe : I therefore seem to have shewn the impracticability of my own scheme for a new coinage, until the mines can be made more productive, which it may perhaps be said is proving too much.

Mr. Hill's observations in his fifth letter, respecting country banks, are very sensible, and appear to be quite correct. They cannot, they dare not, issue their paper, to any great excess ; but to shew to what little arts they have recourse, to increase the circulation as much as possible, I will relate a trifling anecdote :—A

foreign gentleman of my acquaintance, who, for the benefit of the health of part of his family, was under the necessity of residing, nearly the whole of two or three successive summers, at one of our fashionable watering places, and who, for the payment of his expenses, provided himself with bank post bills of £10 and £20 each, observed that, for a month or six weeks, he always received in exchange the notes of one particular country bank; for another like period, he received nothing but the notes of another country bank; and for a third period, those of a third country bank; he thought this remarkable, and resolved to inquire into the cause, when, to his surprise, he found that on the arrival of a partner of one of those country banks, he called together the head waiters of the principal inns, and settled with them a small premium,

for the purchase and collection of all the bankers' notes in the town, in exchange for those of his own firm; he of course sent them in for payment, and his own kept possession of the premises for the time his health or recreation detained him at the place; when some neighbouring rival banker succeeding him, commenced the same operations, extracted the rival notes, and kept possession, during pleasure, of the mart, and so on.

Mr. Hill, in common with other authors, seems totally unaware of the immense consumption of the two precious metals in manufactures, and dismisses the subject by saying, (page 83) "only a small proportion of the precious metals (at least of gold) is consumed in manufactures, and by far the greatest quantity devoted to the purposes of circulation

either as coin or bullion," &c. &c. But I think I have shewn, that the direct contrary is the truth.

At page 85, Mr. Hill says, that " bullion has been prevented from partaking of the general rise in prices, first by being wholly exempt from any direct taxation : secondly, by its own inconsumable nature, which preserves it in almost continual existence, and renders fresh supplies of it less necessary than almost any other article ; thirdly, by its having no value in use separate from its value in exchange."

In answer to these opinions, I think I have shewn, that although it may be inconsumable, it is very convertible into a thousand different shapes that are spread all over the world ; and that there is not perhaps any one article of which

a fresh supply is so necessary, and of which the importation has for the last ten years been so inadequate to the demand. The price has certainly been prevented rising by the prevalence of the erroneous ideas, almost universally entertained, respecting its immutability, intrinsic value, &c. &c. Its very great scarcity has, however, at last forced its value to rise in the general market, and to what height it may go, unless some adequate supply is obtained, is not easy to foresee; but I think it may be foretold, that it never again can be brought into subjection to a law of maximum and minimum, or, in other words, a fixed standard value.

In page 88, Mr. Hill asks, “on what principle can it be accounted for, that during a period of 35 years, from 1760 to 1795, whilst almost every other commo-

dity was rising so rapidly around it, the price of bullion did not advance at all?" and again, "on what principle can the decline of its price after 1795 be accounted for?" In answering the first question, I would deny that *almost* every other commodity was rising; many certainly were rising, but many also were falling, and some remained stationary, or with trifling fluctuations; gold was amongst the latter, and for this plain reason, that the supply during that period was about equal to the demand; but I have before shewn, that both gold and silver had continued nearly stationary for upwards of a hundred years, and I am persuaded from no other cause than the accidental coincidence of supply and demand.

To the second question I answer, that the decline of price, after 1795, was oc-

casioned by the bank restriction bill having substituted notes for gold, and thus suddenly thrown the weight of perhaps ten millions of guineas upon the market, which was more than the watchmakers and goldsmiths could take off in a short time; consequently the price fell, and had it not been for the silly idea of intrinsic value, it would have fallen much more; but since that period, I am convinced that the greater proportion of them (guineas) has been used by the manufacturers in this and other countries in Europe.

Mr. Hill, page 126, justly remarks, that the Bullion Committee have admitted, that the general supply of Europe with gold has been augmented, by all that quantity which this great commercial country has spared, in consequence of the substitution of another medium of



circulation. This, as I have said before, is undoubtedly true; but the Committee and Mr. Hill seem to think, that the whole quantity is either lying perdue in different corners of Europe, or circulating about the different countries in the shape of their respective coins; I however hold another opinion, and beg leave to refer both the gentlemen of the Committee and Mr. Hill to the watchmakers and goldsmiths, goldbeaters and gilders, if they wish to know what has actually become of it.

In some parts of his pamphlet, Mr. Hill says, that a standard value ought to be fixed on the coin, otherwise it would create great confusion; this I have no doubt of admitting to a certain extent: it might at first occasion some confusion, and some altercation between buyers and

sellers, as to the actual value of a quarter of an ounce of gold within 2d. or 3d., but it would soon become a matter of convention or bargain. If a man chose to have gold in exchange for his corn, he would say, I will be paid in gold, at so much an oz., but it would still be referable to the bank money, or bank paper; and after all, it is probable that the paper would be preferred, and the gold neglected; for this was actually the case in many parts of England, long before guineas became scarce, both farmers and manufacturers preferring the paper of the neighbouring banks to the guineas. In Scotland it was so most notoriously; and I recollect having been told by a gentleman, who made a tour of pleasure from this country through Ireland, and thence crossed to Port Patrick, (having been appointed paymaster to his party) that he

provided himself, in London, with a sufficient quantity of new guineas, that he might not meet with any hesitation or difficulty in his money matters; but he found himself mistaken. When he got into Scotland, his shining new pieces, although of full weight, were treated very lightly; they were examined on one side and on the other side, chinked upon the floor, and at last received with doubts and suspicions; and he found it convenient, at the first large town he arrived, to get a quantity of them exchanged for the Scotch bank notes, sufficient to carry the party through the country.

I have said, that I have purposely avoided any mention of the exchanges between the different countries of Europe, thinking them not applicable to the matter in discussion, and I am, on further

reflection, confirmed in this opinion; but I find not only the authors that have written, but the friends with whom I have conversed, attach so much importance to the course of exchange between this and foreign countries, that it seems incumbent upon me to give it some slight consideration.

In regarding Europe as the consuming country, and the other three quarters of the globe as the producing countries, the exchanges between the different divisions are clearly out of consideration.

People seem to be persuaded, that the great bulk of the gold that has been brought to Europe during several centuries is floating about under the shape of different coins, or ingots, and that were the world in a state of tranquility, they

would be transmitted from one to another in payment of the balances of trade, and would regulate the exchanges.

The operation may have been occasionally practised, but I believe not very frequently, nor ever to a sufficient extent to have any influence on the course of exchange, much less to authorize a theory being established upon it. In this I seem to coincide with Mr. Huskisson; but Mr. Lyne thinks, and his main argument appears to rest upon it, that this exportation of gold is the principal cause of the rise in its price. But what say the documents?

The account in the appendix to the report of the Bullion Committee, No. 1, shews, that the whole quantity of gold exported from this country to foreign

parts, during the last ten years, was 275,930 ounces, at £4. 10s. per ounce, making £1,241,000, or about £1000 each post day; which, I should imagine, upon such an exchange as that of London, would have no sensible effect, and very little upon the price of the metal.

The quantity of silver exported during the same period, was thirty-seven millions of ounces, from which must be deducted twenty-eight millions of ounces sent to China, leaving nine millions of ounces, or two millions and a half value in money, or about double the value of the gold; still together they cannot account for the smallest fractional difference in the London exchange; but silver, even in this country, is held to be an article of merchandize, and therefore can be no more reckoned as affecting the ex-

changes than any other article of colonial produce.

The Bullion Committee say, that the import of silver has lately been unusually large, and the export to China having lately ceased, the metal ought to be abundant and cheap, notwithstanding which, the price of it has nearly kept pace with that of gold; but what says the appendix to their report? The document before referred to, No. 8, makes the amount of the import, from the 1st January, 1809, to the 30th March, 1810, amount to two millions; No. 4 makes the export last year 3,190,000 oz. or upwards of £900,000; the consumption of our silversmiths is to an equal amount; I would, therefore, ask the gentlemen of the Committee, where is the superflux of import that ought to reduce the price?

That the exchanges with the Continent should be in general against this country, is not at all surprising; there are some articles they produce which we cannot dispense with, for example naval stores and corn; while the despot who governs nearly the whole of it, rigorously forbids the receipt of any article in payment that has been in this country.

Our pounds sterling must therefore be reduced in price upon the Continent, so far as to enable the foreigner to obtain payment for what he has sent us, either at the risk of smuggling it, or in some other circuitous and expensive way. It is true, if we had abundance of guineas, we might elude the enemy's vigilance, and slip them into the pockets of our creditors; but, alas! they are all gone, and appropriated to other uses; nor do I know



'of any other mean of obtaining a supply' of the material of which, they are made, than that of setting aside the silly, distinction between this metal and other commodities, discarding theoretical speculations, following the dictates of common sense, and endeavouring to infuse a little of its spirit into the mind of the prince regent of Brazil and his government. If we are to look around for any one article as the great cause of setting the exchange against us, it will not be difficult to fix upon it, and that is *corn*. When the kingdom is in want of this essential article, the quantity of it is so very large, and the amount of it so immense, that its influence upon the exchanges is felt almost instantaneously.

The little table inserted at the end of Mr. Bosanquet's pamphlet, is decisive

upon this point, and shews the course of exchange has invariably followed the price of wheat for the last twenty years: I take the liberty of copying and placing it here, for the information of my readers, who may not have seen his work.

WHEAT, PER QUARTER.			EXCHANGE IN FAVOUR.	EXCHANGE BELOW PAR.
1790	53	2	} Exchange 5 or 6 per cent. in favour till the spring of 1795.	} Below par till lat- ter end of 1796.
1791	47	0		
1792	42	11		
1793	48	11		
1794	51	8		
1795	74	2	} Greatly in favor till the Autumn of 1792.	} 5 or 6 per cent. below par until the middle of 1802.
1796	77	1		
1797	53	1		
1798	50	3		
1799	67	6		
1800	113	7	} In favour, with the exception of a few months between the harvest of 1805 and summer of 1806.	} From 5 per cent. above to 2 per cent. below par.
1801	118	3		
1802	67	5		
1803	56	6		
1804	60	1		
1805	87	10	} Below par from November, 1808.	}
1806	79	0		
1807	73	3		
1808	79	0		
1809	95	7		
1810 about	105	0		

In the report of the Bullion Committee, great importance is attached to the fact,

deduced from evidence, that the price of gold in most places on the Continent has not advanced ; as it shews, says the report, that the actual prices of gold in the foreign markets are just so much lower than its market price here, as the difference of the exchange amounts to. Granted, and how should it be otherwise? Suppose, for example, that gold in France, twenty years ago, was 91 livres per oz. at 10d. per livre, equal to about 78s. and the exchange 25 livres per pound sterling ; the price of gold in England rises to 90s. per ounce, but the exchange falls to 20 livres ; the person, therefore, in France, who should order a quantity of gold from England, and remit bills for the payment, might still sell it for the old price in France, and get a small profit. From this the Committee would infer, that our money is depreciated ; and,

in fact, it is so with respect to that and some other countries; but it proves no more, than that our powerful and inveterate enemy has been so far successful, by his prohibitory decrees, as to have forced us to pay a very high price for all the articles we are under the necessity of purchasing from the countries under his influence; and that his deep laid schemes and machinations for the ruin of our commerce, in which he has so obstinately persevered, are at length beginning to take effect, the alarming state of commercial affairs loudly proclaims. But what would an impartial spectator say to the conduct of our own government, under such circumstances? Would he believe, that every step we have taken, every law and ordinance we have published, has had a tendency to forward

and assist the enemy in this injurious mode of warfare?

We have the value of millions in colonial produce lying dead in every port of the kingdom, and the value of many millions more of goods, of all kinds, crowded into the warehouses of our manufacturers; the sale and export of which, I will venture to say, are almost as much impeded by our own laws as by those of the enemy.

Is it to be believed, did it not appear in evidence before this very Committee, that at the time our markets were overstocked with cotton wool, the government should have rigorously prohibited the export of it? This cotton had been paid for by our manufactured goods, and

France, by an indirect channel, would have taken it in payment for her corn, but our government would not allow of such transactions.

Had we ever so many guineas in circulation, they would be forced out of the country by such policy. We have at this moment, I should compute, not much less than the value of two millions sterling of cotton wool, of which our manufacturers are not in want; but we are not permitted to send it abroad, although France should be willing to receive it.

When the crop of corn falls short, it is not by pecks and bushels that we want it, but by thousands, and even millions of quarters: if it be short only one-eighth, it would require 1,250,000 quarters to supply the deficiency; if one-fourth, dou-

ble the quantity, which, at £3 per quarter, would amount to seven millions and a half. How insignificant then does not this useless metal appear, when compared with the value and importance of our daily bread? If we are desirous of restoring our sterling money to a par with the monies of other countries, our first step should be to cultivate our soil, until we can make it produce a sufficiency of provisions for the inhabitants that tread upon it, or by other means, bring the supply to a par with the consumption; then, indeed, and then only, may we be said to become independent.

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At the time the proof of these additions was in my hand for correction, I received the Monthly Review for January, and find my pamphlet noticed in the last article of the catalogue. The replies to

many of the Reviewers' remarks, it will be seen, have been anticipated. I am censured for having dared to dissent from the opinions of the celebrated Dr. Adam Smith; but surely no name, however high; no reputation, however solid, can sanction error, or should stifle inquiry. The subject on which this great philosopher wrote, is of general interest; and it appears to me, hardly any reflecting man, however busily employed in commercial concerns, can avoid meditating upon some point or other of political œconomy at every vacant moment.

I am in possession of the second edition of Dr. Smith's work on the Wealth of Nations, which I read at the time of its appearance; but could never subscribe to all his opinions, and to this in particular,—That the rise in the price of com-



modities was occasioned by the depreciation or excess of money ; for, if this were true, it would seem to follow, that the rise in the price of articles ought to be in an exact ratio or proportion to each other ; whereas, the price of corn at this moment is nearly treble that at which I remember it, and the price of butchers' meat not more than double ; and many other instances of the like disproportion might be found.

The Reviewer says I shall find, that during the last twenty years, many more articles have risen than fallen : it may be so, if the whole were enumerated. I have already mentioned iron, one of the principal productions of our own country ; I may add to it copper, as cheaper now than at any time since the invention of sheathing ships with it ; and perhaps I

may venture likewise to add, the most important one of fuel, which I do believe is cheaper, at the mouth of the pit, than it was twenty years ago, notwithstanding the incalculable increase of consumption by steam engines, founderies, and furnaces of every description: many articles of luxury, particularly in dress, are cheaper; and of foreign articles, I think it may be asserted, that every one, (with the exception of corn) the produce of countries not in the possession of our enemies, is as cheap as it was at that period.

It is also said, that had I ventured a little further into the depths of political œconomy, I should have discovered that it is the natural tendency of things to become cheaper as society advances, and that enhancement is produced by taxa-

tion. The former is exactly what I have been endeavouring to prove, and the latter I have expressly declared. That it is the natural tendency of things to become cheaper, as far as the capacity of our soil admits, there cannot be the smallest doubt: we can invent machinery to abridge labour; we can dig deep and penetrate far underneath the earth, in search of metals, but we cannot extend its surface, whereon alone provisions can be produced; for which plain reason, food has become dear, and almost every thing else cheap: but why we should give up these two popular and significant words, and in place of them say, that money has become too plentiful, I never could see a good reason. That its amount has most astonishingly increased in this kingdom, there can be no question, but the increase has been

demanded by the proportionate augmentation of our internal traffic.

It has been alleged, that both the bank of England and the country bankers have issued their paper-money to excess; but this cannot be done without almost immediate correction; and, I may say, never has been done to an extent that could affect the community at large.

So long, then, as our government does not attempt by any arbitrary act, to force upon us a paper-money of its own creation, or to influence the directors of the bank to advance their notes, without ample provision being first made for their speedy redemption, we may, in my humble opinion, proceed in our present system with the most perfect security.



**THREE LETTERS**

**TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE**

***JOHN LORD ELDON,***

***&c. &c. &c.***



LIBERTY OF THE SUBJECT AND THE PRESS.

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THREE LETTERS,

ADDRESSED TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

*JOHN LORD ELDON,*

LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

HIS HAVING EXCLUDED GENTLEMEN WHO HAVE

WRITTEN FOR THE PUBLIC JOURNALS

FROM THE

ENGLISH BAR.

---

BY

*One who was a Writer for the Newspapers.*

---

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR C. CHAPPLE, PALL-MALL.

1810.



J. Tyler, Printer,  
Rathbone Place.

# THREE LETTERS,

&c. &c. &c. ' .

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## LETTER I.

MY LORD,

21st Dec. 1809.

**I**N addressing your Lordship, I think any apology unnecessary, as the subject of my observations is one which is immediately referable to the profession, of which your Lordship, by the station you fill, must be considered the head. It is a subject which imports considerations of no less moment than whether that profession, which has ever been esteemed honourable and liberal, doubtless because its professors are, or at least are supposed to be, actuated by sentiments of honour and liberality, shall longer continue to assume the pre-eminence of being so characterized; or whether, on the contrary, it shall not be deemed to have forfeited its pretensions, by the adoption, among its professors, of a principle of action founded on selfish, illiberal, and aristocratical notions, as inconsistent with true dignity as they are hostile to the very essence and spirit of our free constitution.

Your Lordship has recently been a candidate for the high office of Chancellor of one of the most liberal and enlightened Universities in Europe.—If to your Lordship it is justly imputable that you have either sanctioned, or not prevented, having had the power of doing so, an arbitrary system, which would have disgraced the days of Monkish ignorance, then shall I say, it is truly a theme of exultation that you have been disappointed in the attainment of a distinction of which you would have been unworthy.

On the very day when the event of your contest for the Chancellorship of Oxford was yet uncertain, though your success was anticipated by many, who knew your Lordship's power, and the probable effect of the "No Popery" clamour, I own it struck me as an omen most inauspicious to the future prosperity of the University, and to the general advancement of science, to observe, in that Court only over which you preside, a placard posted up in these words, "That no person who has WRITTEN FOR HIRE IN THE NEWSPAPERS shall be admitted to do exercises to entitle him to be called to the Bar."

I have ever been taught to consider it as one of the most distinguishing features of the free Constitution and Government of England, that the path to honours in every profession, and even to the highest employments of the State, was alike open to all the subjects of the King. It is expressly so stated by an eminent commentator on our laws; but he wrote before your Lordship was Chancellor.

Now, who are these persons against whom this sweeping interdiction is pronounced? I will suppose one of them to be the younger son of an honourable, but not an opulent parent; that he is sent forth upon the world to seek

his fortune, with no other inheritance than his father's blessing, and the advantages of a liberal education, perhaps not obtained for him without many sacrifices ; I will suppose him placed in the metropolis, where his appearance, to gain respect, must be that of a gentleman. He feels conscious of his strength, and is ambitious of embracing one of the learned professions. The law seems to open to him the fairest prospect of success. In his pursuit he has every difficulty to encounter, from the want of that assistance which the rich only can command ; he puts forth his talents, and renders them available through the medium of those publications by which the people of this country have been more instructed and illumined than they could have been, or would be, by reading all the law-books that have been or ever will be written. Well ! he does this, and he derives from it that fair, honourable, and well-earned remuneration which every man is entitled to for his exertions, whether they are literary or active, mental or corporeal. He improves himself, while he is improving others ; he obtains those resources which enable him to pursue his studies ; but, at length, when his term of probation is nearly expired, he enters Lincoln's-Inn Hall, the local habitation, not of rigid justice, but of a superior and milder genius, EQUITY ; he sees your Lordship installed as her representative, and, on looking around him, instead of contemplating those emblems which should adorn a Fane, sacred by the object of its dedication, he observes the wall polluted by the dreadful denunciation—the *mene tekel*—“Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting. It is true, you may be a man of consummate ability—you may give promise of one day becoming a British Minos in the administration of the laws ; but you have written for hire in the newspapers, and you cannot be permitted to do those exercises which

are to entitle you to be called to the Bar." Can such things be? Does this pretended rule of law, which restricts the birthright of the subject, emanate from the legislature, or from the Benchers of Lincoln's-Inn, or from your Lordship? If this principle of exclusion be once admitted, or, rather, presumed to be admitted—if it be not repressed by your Lordship, or a higher authority, where will it stop? It is a rule which may be rendered applicable to an extent that would exclude all talent from the English Bar, and make the decisions of Courts of Justice and Equity depend upon the crude reasoning and arguments of men who had been admitted to the privilege of practising as advocates, and, ultimately, of sitting in judgment, not because they were men of merit, but because, fortunately for them, it was not in their power to write a line, for which the Editors of Newspapers, who are, generally, pretty accurate judges of what is good writing, would give even the value of the paper on which it was written.

I have given a correct delineation, generally speaking, of a writer in a newspaper. I believe it answers the description of those who usually come under that denomination. There may be exceptions; there may be persons, in the inferior departments of Journals, who, comparatively speaking, are as insignificant as many of those Barristers who are called, but not chosen, and to whom a man of common sense would no more entrust his cause, than he would the care of his health, or the preservation of his life, to an impudent empiric who was ignorant of the first lines of physic.

Permit me now to present this subject to your Lordship in another point of view. I will suppose that, by a con-

currence of events hardly within the reach of probability, that branch of the Legislature, which is presumed to represent the Commons of England, was actually composed of Senators in every respect independent—men, who disdained to court the smiles of Ministers, on the one hand, or the mutable and too often indiscriminating applause of the people, on the other. I will imagine such a representation saying among themselves, “We wish to remain in as pure a state as we now are, at the moment of our convention. How is this to be effected? Why, chiefly by not suffering ourselves to be contaminated by the presence of lawyers. They are a race of men whose days and hours are constantly occupied in the contortion of right into wrong, and wrong into right—of vice into virtue, and innocence into guilt. There are among them men who, for a few guineas, will exert their whole faculties to take away the life of a fellow-creature, by convicting him of an offence they know he has not committed; or who will endeavour to retain in the possession of a villain, that estate of which they are conscious he has despoiled the lawful heir.—These men, so habituated, are unfit to be legislators. They will plead against the cause of their country just as soon as they would against the cause of justice; and if our enemies should give them a bribe in the shape of a brief or a fee, they will think it incumbent upon them to do the best they can for their client, and, consequently, to sacrifice the interests of their country.”—Suppose this to be the language of an independent Parliament, what would the lawyers say to it? They would condemn it as unjust, partial, and illegal, though perhaps there might be as much sound policy, as truth and good sense, in such a principle of exclusion. I will not be so uncharitable as to say this would be a just picture of modern lawyers, but certainly the reason

for preventing their introduction to the Legislative Assembly would be as legitimate as any they or your Lordship can urge for the exclusion, from the English Bar, of a class of men, some of whom were, without objection, admitted to it before your Lordship was Chancellor, and at this moment either rank high as advocates, or administer justice from the Bench. It would be invidious, after having read such an anathema in your Lordship's Court, to name those to whom I allude. A very little inquiry will give your Lordship all the information you can require on the subject. Surely no man will be the worse lawyer for being a good writer. If he be a good writer, it is natural he should be ambitious of writing for the eye of the public; and if he writes for the public, it is but reasonable he should be rewarded, without, by his acceptance of reward, rendering himself liable either to civil or political disabilities.

I will not lengthen my address to your Lordship, by asking you, what it is that constitutes the difference between those who write for hire, and those who speak for hire: it seems to be a distinction altogether without a difference; except that, with regard to the latter, their prostitution of talent is notorious and common: *verba et iram locunt*. If, when your Lordship was at the bar, a client had given you a brief to sustain a bad cause, it would have been your duty to have made the worse appear the better side. I condemn not lawyers for the immorality of their profession, as it is at present exercised; it is an evil which the existing state of society has rendered necessary. I blame them only for presuming to exclude from their profession, men, many of whom are as honorable and learned as the most exalted among them.

I repeat, that if what I have adverted to is in any respect attributable to your Lordship, you will do well to exert your authority in erasing a resolution, or bye-law, which, if appealed from, could not be acted upon, and probably would have no other effect than that of transmitting the *epoch* of your Lordship's Chancellorship to posterity, accompanied with sentiments of regret that a person capable of sanctioning such a proceeding should have ever had the power.

I remain, &c. &c.

ONE WHO WAS A WRITER FOR  
THE NEWSPAPERS.



## LETTER II.

MY LORD,

3d Jan. 1810.

SOME time ago I addressed your Lordship on the subject of a placard posted up in Lincoln's-Inn-Hall, the place where you hold the Court of Chancery, interdicting all persons, who had ever written for hire in the newspapers, from *doing those exercises which should enable them to be called to the bar*. The terms and scope of my address were rather of a general and introductory nature, tending to point out the illegality of the exclusion, and to expose the illiberality of the principle that gave it birth. I traced, not in false or flattering, but in true and unvarnished colours, the portrait of a writer for the journals; and, for the sake of your own dignity and character, I do sincerely hope you have, in contemplating it, taken from your mind's eye the mote which impaired its vision. I might have represented it under the similtude of a rising plant, nurtured in the warm sunshine of a southern aspect, bearing, and giving promise of bearing, goodly fruit; and have inferred, I fear without the imputation of harshness or injustice, that your Lordship's influence, like the deadly blight coming from the North, had depressed its growth, withered its blossoms, and nearly cankered it to the very root.

It has been stated to me, by a kind of demi-official communication, that I have mistaken the object of my attack; that your Lordship has nothing to do with the subject of my complaint; that you are not a Bench-er of Lincoln's-Inn; and that what I have unfairly attributed to you, has proceeded from a set or persons acting in-

dependently, and without having been controuled, either by your Lordship, or any authority whatever. Is this a defence you are yourself willing to avow? If it is, I shall have attained one most important point towards that ultimate success to which I look forward with confidence; I shall then have your distinct admission, that you are truly ashamed of having it supposed you could have given your countenance to such a proceeding; and that you are desirous the odium of it should not be cast on you, but on those alone to whom all the responsibility of the act belongs. There are some propositions so monstrous, that they refute themselves—they may be improbable, or they may be inconsistent with truths not generally known. With respect to the proposition, that your Lordship is not the direct author of this innovation, it will be my task to shew that both these touchstones apply. First, then, I say, it is improbable. Can any man believe that the Benchers of Lincoln's-Inn would have presumed to have established a rule for the qualification or disqualification of persons who were to plead in the Court where you represent your Sovereign, without first having consulted you, and had your sanction? Would they have dared, I say, to have altered the common law of the land, by restricting the rights of any class of men in the country? or would they have libelled your Lordship, by affixing their ordinance to that effect immediately before your eyes, if they had not had, or if they had not conceived they had, your express avowal? The thing is absolutely incredible! Besides, you would not have permitted them to have done the act they have done, if it had not been perfectly accordant to your own wishes. So much, then, for the probability of the proposition, that I have mistaken the object of my attack. I proceed to the application of my

second test. It is some years since a certain bookseller, I think of the name of Eaton, was tried upon an information for publishing a pamphlet of a seditious tendency. Your Lordship was then Attorney-General, and, as such, the official prosecutor for the Crown. You cross-examined one of the witnesses produced on the part of the Defendant; that witness, as I recollect, did not, by his answers, place himself in a very favourable point of view. When asked what his profession was? he said he was a student at law. It did not appear that he had entered himself of any of the Inns of Court, but he professed his occupation of doing so. Upon being more closely interrogated by you, he admitted, and I firmly believe truly, that he was a writer of the newspapers; upon which your Lordship immediately expressed yourself to this effect—and I state your words, not so much on my own recollection, as on the authority of the more accurate remembrance of others—you exclaimed nearly in these terms: “*It shall be my care that none of these newspaper writers shall ever have it in their power to be called to the bar!*” You found one person of doubtful character, perhaps, falsely describing himself as a writer for the public journals, and expressing an intention of becoming a student at law—you immediately determined that the pretensions of all future candidates for the profession should not depend upon individual merit or demerit; and you declared your firm resolve to use your authority, indiscriminately, for the purpose of preventing all persons who should, at any period of their lives, have instructed their fellow-creatures through the medium of a newspaper, and had been rewarded for their honorable labour, from ever approaching the threshold of that temple which the law and constitution of England says is open to every subject.

Now, supposing I am correct, was this either liberal or candid? Is this a thing fit to be related of a Nobleman aspiring to become Chancellor of a learned University, the nursery, the *Alma Mater* of science. Without considering how many writers for newspapers there are, whose talents would adorn any assembly known to the Constitution of England, you reject them all from the profession of the law, because you once found one who was unworthy.

To proceed by degrees—Thus, then, stands the argument with respect to the proposition that your Lordship is not the author of this unjust system of exclusion. I have inferred its improbability, and I have shewn that it is utterly inconsistent with a fact in the history of your Lordship's life. I find you, when you was Attorney-General, manifesting an inclination to do a particular act; nay more, I find you expressing a determination to carry your intention into effect. I find the very thing you threatened when you was Attorney-General, executed in the year 1807, when you was Chancellor, and in the zenith of power; and, in addition to all this, I find notice of it given in the very Court over which your authority more peculiarly extends.—Can there be a doubt upon the subject? I have demonstrated, with mathematical precision, the truth of my position, that your Lordship was the prime cause and mover of this odious restriction. I have fairly given my *data*, and I shall leave the public to draw the corollary.

I am free to admit, that what I am accusing your Lordship of, has, in effect, been done by the Benchers of Lincoln's-Inn, and is apparently their act: but will any man, ambitious of a silk gown, attempt to defend

you, by throwing around you such a flimsy veil of gossamer, which a breath is sufficient to dissipate?—No! My charge is, that it is your Lordship's deed—that you have either commanded it to be done, or, having the power, have not prevented it—

—Qui non vetat peccare jubet—  
Amici vitia si feras facis tua.

Upon this principle, and for the other reasons I have stated, I must still continue of opinion, that I have not mistaken the proper object of my attack; and that in flying my falcon at the higher game, I have acted the part of a judicious sportsman.

I now proceed to mention the names of these same Benchers, this *soi-disant* corporation, these Lincoln's-Inn Legislators, who have arrogated to themselves the right of making bye-laws, forsooth, which are to exclude from a lucrative profession a particular class of his Majesty's subjects, who have committed no crime I know of, that should operate as a perpetual attainder, except that they may have been too active in exposing the weakness and imbecility of some of the Administrations of which you have been a component part.

The following is a correct list of this convocation of politic Benchers:—

John Soley, Esq. John Street, King's Road.

Richard Ray, Esq. Hawleigh, Suffolk.

John Ord, Esq. 43, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Francis Burton, Esq. 5, Upper Brook Street, Grosvenor square.

William Selwyn, Esq. King's Road, Bedford Row.

Right Hon. Lord Erskine, Hampstead.

Right Hon. Viscount Sidmouth, 12, Gloucester Place,  
Portman Square.

Right Hon. Sir William Grant, Knt. Master of the  
Rolls, Chancery Lane.

Right Hon. Lord Glenbervie, Conduit Street, Hanover  
Square.

Sir Thomas Plumer, 19, Lincoln's Inn.

Sir John Anstruther, Bart. 23, Albemarle Street.

William Garrow, Esq. Bedford Row, and 2, Serle  
Court, Lincoln's Inn.

William Mainwaring, Esq. Hanover Square.

Sir Vicary Gibbs, Bedford Square, and 2, Serle Court,  
Lincoln's Inn.

Robert Dallas, Esq. 3, Serle Court, Lincoln's Inn, and  
5, Bedford Square.

Right Hon. Spencer Perceval, 57, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

William Adam, Esq. 4, Serle Court, Lincoln's Inn,  
and Bloomsbury Square.

James Allan Park, Esq. 33, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Richard Howard, Esq. Grosvenor-square.

Abel Moysey, Esq. 23, Hart Street, Bloomsbury Square.

Sir John Pollen, Bart. Redenham, near Andover.

Francis Hargrave, Esq. New Boswell Court, Carey  
Street.

Edmund Dayrell, Esq. 10, Old Buildings, Lincoln's  
Inn.

George Wilson, Esq. 6, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn.

Thomas Milles, Esq. 4, Serle Court, Lincoln's Inn.

Charles Thomson, Esq. 13, Old Buildings, Lincoln's  
Inn.

Henry Martin, Esq. 2, Serle Court, Lincoln's Inn.

Nathaniel Gooding Clarke, Esq. 5, Brick Court, Temple.

It will be observed, that in the above list there are some Masters in Chancery; some persons who have retired to their estates; some of them persons of whom I shall hereafter have much to say; and others, whose well-known liberality of sentiment will not allow me to attribute to them even a knowledge of this odious measure.

I hope, the only effect of my making their names public will be to give them an opportunity of disavowing their participation in an act which is in opposition to the whole tenor of their political lives, and would, if it could be truly imputed to them, stamp their characters with the seal of hypocrisy.

I feel the necessity of bringing this letter to a conclusion. What I have left unfinished, believe me, shall not be omitted in my next. I think I have already done enough to shew, that those who may be at the pains to explore the horoscope of that adverse fate which impended over the heads of the mortals among whom I am classed, and threatened to deprive us of our civil and political rights, will find that, in an evil hour, you was Lord of the ascendant, shedding your influence over minor, but more malign planets. I trust the guardian Genius which brought light from darkness, and science from barbarism, will cover us with her wings, and counteract the destiny that hangs lowering over us.

Be assured, no exertions of mine shall be wanting to produce the great end. I am strong in the justice of my cause, and, at present, require no aid. Avoid a defeat, by a victory over yourself. Acknowledge, that in an unguarded moment you have done, or suffered to be done, that which your better judgment revolts at. Let your

word go forth : repeal this disgraceful, illiberal, illegal, and unconstitutional bye-law. Suffer not the banner of ignorance, pride, and aristocracy to remain longer unfurled within the walls of a Court of Equity ; and, by so honorable an exertion of your authority, spare me the pain of again addressing you.

I remain, &c. &c.



## LETTER III.

MY LORD.

18th Jan. 1810.

TWICE have I addressed your Lordship on the subject of that placard which is suffered to sully the walls of the Hall where the Court of Chancery is held ; twice, with a prophetic and warning voice, have I advised you to rescue your character from the odium which will attach to it, if you should descend from your high office, without previously obliterating that illegal and unconstitutional bye-law of an egoistical Corporation, who have presumed to declare, that men, who have written for the Journals of the only free country under the canopy of Heaven, shall be excluded from the profession of the law, and shall not be entitled to do those exercises which are to enable them to be called to the Bar.

It was my intention to have represented to you what would have been the effect of such a vicious system of partial exclusion, if, instead of having its date within the period of your Lordship's influence, it could have been traced to an æra, anterior to that in which literature so eminently flourished in this country. It was my purpose to have shewn what sort of persons were likely to have come within the prohibition ; but, upon reflection, I find I should be taking too wide a range ; my Address would exceed even the prolixity of a bill in Chancery ; I should have to enumerate nearly all the celebrated writers of the last century, from Addison down to the Learned Judge \* who now administers the laws of England to the inhabitants of Indostan.

\* Sir James Macintosh.

It has been reserved for your judicial existence to engender this monstrous production; and future historians will have to say, that while Lord Eldon, the candidate for the Chancellorship of Oxford, held the scales, such an edict was suffered to be promulgated by a junta of Lincoln's Inn Benchers, acting immediately under his eye and authority.

With the assistance of these instruments, you have done all in your power to degrade and lower in society a class of men, who, in every unprejudiced point of view, were entitled to your respect. You have made the Court of Chancery like the desert that surrounds the *Upas*-tree. You have exhaled an atmosphere in which genius and learning can neither thrive or even exist. You have rendered it inaccessible to all, except those who, by the adventitious circumstances of birth and fortune, are destitute of that stimulus which can alone render them useful to the public, and urge them to exertions, without which, celebrity is unattainable in any profession.

Let me ask your Lordship, what there is in the character of a writer for the public journals which should justly subject him to be treated as an alien to the British Constitution, and to be considered unworthy its protection?

Who, when the inveterate and hereditary rivals and enemies of this country threatened to stain its sacred soil with our own blood, and when rumours were abroad of an immediate invasion by their hostile bands—who, I say, seized the war-denouncing trumpet of Fame, and “blew a blast so loud and dread,” that it was heard from one extremity of the kingdom to the other? The writers for the newspapers. Who, at that awful moment, assisted the Government in arming

400,000 brave men, who, under able direction, would have scattered to the four winds of Heaven all the armies that could have been brought against them? The writers for the public journals did this.—Who, at that eventful crisis, caught the spark of patriotism, fanned it to a flame, and, by dilating it, warmed the bosom of every Briton; converting, by a species of magic, the sons of industry into warriors? The writers for the newspapers.—Who, when (dreadful to be remembered!) a mutiny in the navy was on the point of giving France those fleets she never could have conquered—who, I ask, prevented this catastrophe, by conveying to our deluded seamen the words of wisdom and admonition, which flowed from the lips of the country's most revered representatives? The writers for the newspapers.—Who have instructed the people of England, and, while they have made them as competent judges of good government as those by whom they are governed, have infused into them, or, at least, eminently encouraged, that spirit of loyalty and affection to their King and Constitution, which induces them to bear, with patience and resignation, evils at which a less enlightened nation might revolt? The writers for the newspapers have done this!—And are these the men who are to be disgraced, to be lessened in their own estimation, and in the opinion of the public, by a non-descript, self-elected assembly of Benchers, sitting in conclave in Lincoln's Inn? Why, the human mind shrinks from the contemplation of such a prodigy. I am ashamed that such men should have ever breathed the air of England—they are adapted to a different meridian. They should have been placed among the members of that subservient Senate, who debase the nobler attributes of man by their abject submission to the worst of tyranny. Those who, because they vainly think they have the power, would trample upon

the rights of any class of their fellow-citizens, are unworthy to be denominated Englishmen.

I now proceed to a very material part of the question—It is the investigation of the extraordinary phrase I find in that placard, which, to my utter astonishment, you have not yet removed from your presence, representing, as I have already observed you do, a Sovereign, who has ever been ambitious of being considered the patron and promoter of learning. The words to which I refer are these—“No person who has written, *for hire*, in the newspapers, shall be called to the Bar.”—Now, upon what ground is it, that a motive, which applies to all the transactions in which mankind can possibly be concerned, is selected, in order to deprive a particular class of their civil and political rights? If we could extend our observance to every part of the universe, we should hardly find a single individual, engaged in any pursuit whatever, who is not so engaged for hire or gain, which are convertible terms.

What can be more honorable than the character of a British merchant? Yet does he freight his ships and risque his merchandize without a prospect of gain? Does not his hire consist in that advantageous return he receives from the persons with whom he traffics? How is his commerce conducted? Wholly by persons, who, in their different departments, serve him for hire. Would those who navigate his vessels, trust themselves to the perils of the deep by day and by night, if they were not hired to brave the dangers of adverse elements, with which they necessarily have to contend? But, to proceed a degree beyond this, what are our armies composed of, from the highest to the lowest rank? Why men, actuated, in a

certain degree, by native valour, and a thirst for glory ; but mainly impelled, as soldiers ever have been, and ever will be, by the hire they are to receive. I believe few instances can be mentioned of armies keeping the field, after their pay or hire has been withheld from them. Look to our navy, our intrepid and invincible seamen—is there a man, from the Admiral to the common sailor, who would be found in the service if he was not hired ? I deprecate any invidious construction being put on these observations ; I am merely using, in my own defence, an argument which pride and a false view of the subject have forced upon me. What are the persons who, from time to time, compose the Administrations that are supposed to rule the country ? Why, the hired servants of the public ; and pretty high wages they receive, considering what sorry servants some of them are. Did any one ever hear of a Minister giving his services to his country gratuitously ? Consult Mr. Perceval : if that be not convenient, *The Bed Book* will answer the question. What are you ? Lord High Chancellor of England—but are you not Lord High Chancellor for hire ? Would you sacrifice your time and your domestic enjoyments, if you was not paid for it ? Would you sit from morn till eve, in Lincoln's Inn Hall, and from eve till morn in the House of Lords, if you was not hired ? Would you take the pains you do, to execute justice between parties in whose concerns you have no personal interest, if you derived no reward from your exertions ? Would you, as I frequently observe you do, after hearing, for hours, the tedious arguments of Counsel, take home with you verbose proceedings, to read which, must occupy many additional hours, in order to make assurance double sure, and be morally certain that your decree, which is to affect the property and interest of others, shall be free

from every exception—that it shall be satisfactory even to the unsuccessful suitor—and be founded on those unerring principles of justice and equity, which shall make it a beacon to guide future Chancellors?—would you do all this, if you did not do it for hire—could it be expected of you? I am far from wishing to infer that your emoluments are even adequate to your labours—I blame you only for having adopted that uncharitable and Anti-Christian principle, which has urged you, who have been so liberally dealt by yourself, to act with illiberality towards others. This is a subject which is grievous to me to pursue. If you rightly consider it, I am persuaded it must overwhelm you with confusion, and I hope with repentance, that you should have sat one instant in the Court of Chancery with such a placard—such a memorial of ignorance—staring you in the face. If I may use a language, certainly not very classical, but familiar to you, I say you have mortgaged the fee-simple of your fame to prejudice, subject only to a proviso of redemption in case you should, by your restoration to a better way of thinking, be enabled to make satisfaction. Your estate is on the point of being foreclosed. Let me advise you to avail yourself of your equity, and, by an act of justice, transmit the inheritance unincumbered to your posterity.

It was my intention to have made a few remarks with reference to some of your honorable Benchers whose names I find in the list, particularly one of them \*, who was himself a writer, at a very humble hire indeed, for the newspaper of which the late Mr. Woodfall was once proprietor; but as your Lordship's conduct is my theme,

\* William Garrow, Esq.

it would be a waste of time to throw away a word upon lesser objects.

In addressing your Lordship, I have acquitted myself to my own feelings, and have done what I could, to shew my attachment to the ancient institutions of my country, as they existed before you was Chancellor. The moment I found that an usurped authority had destroyed one of the characteristics of our free Government, by closing the gate which leads to distinction, against a particular class of individuals, and had written over it, "knock, but it shall not be opened to you," that moment I determined to oppose such an innovation.

It would have been a reproach to the present period of our history, if, when an insidious and fatal blow was aimed at the liberty of the subject, and the freedom of the press, there had not been one man found to protest against it. I have protested, and do protest against it. All that remains to be done by me is this : if I can find, and it would be impious to suppose I cannot, one among the representatives of my country, who will present my Petition to that august Assembly from which alone redress is to be obtained, I solemnly pledge myself to state this grievance in terms which shall completely bring it within its powerful jurisdiction. The cause will then be out of my hands ; and whatever may be the result, I shall have the satisfaction of having done what I think my duty.

If I should again see this placard, to which your attention has been so repeatedly drawn, in defiance of all decency disgracing a Court of Equity, I shall be confirmed in the truth and justice of all the inferences and

observations I have addressed to you. I shall be assured you still entertain the sentiments from which it sprang.

As these are sentiments by which no man possessed of learning himself, or capable of patronising and encouraging it in others, can be actuated. I shall congratulate the University of Oxford upon the good sense and prudence they will have manifested, in not having chosen you for their Chancellor.

I remain, &c. &c.

THE END.





*SECOND EDITION.*

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A LETTER

TO

SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, BART.

ON

THE REPORT

OF THE

BULLION COMMITTEE.

---

*Price Half a Crown*



# A LETTER

TO THE RIGHT HON.

SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, BART. M. P.

*supporting his Arguments*

IN REFUTATION OF THOSE ADVANCED BY

MR. HUSKISSON,

ON THE SUPPOSED DEPRECIATION OF OUR CURRENCY

INCLUDING

*A LETTER TO*

SIR CHARLES PRICE, Bart. M. P.

*IN AUGUST LAST,*

ON THE REPORT OF THE BULLION COMMITTEE.

---

SECOND EDITION.

CONTAINING

*Observations on the recent measure adopted by the Bank  
of England, relative to the Dollar Tokens, &c.*

---

BY I. M. SIORDET, MERCHANT.

OF LONDON.

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1811.



## *ADVERTISEMENT.*

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**A**T the period I wrote the following pages, I did not anticipate that they would ever be submitted to the perusal of the Public.

The Report of the Bullion Committee, caused an uneasiness in my mind, which induced me in AUGUST last, to address a letter to Sir Charles Price, Bart. M. P. on the subject of the Report.

I should have contented myself with having thus far opposed, through a mercantile channel, the doctrines and dangerous expedients, recommended by the said Committee to the Honorable the House of Commons, as a remedy of the evil attached to the circulation of our Coin, during the

present high price of Bullion; but having recently read Mr. Huskisson's pamphlet, entitled, "The Question concerning the depreciation of our Currency," I have again been tempted to renew the subject, through the medium of the following letter, addressed to the Right Honorable Sir John Sinclair, Bart. M. P.

The more I consider the point in question, the more firmly am I convinced, that a plain mode of argument, founded on practical knowledge and observation, is the most likely means of arriving at the truth.—I wish not to arrogate to myself such knowledge; the highly respectable evidence given before the Bullion Committee, is alone sufficient to establish the truth of this assertion.

I should not have presumed, at the present moment, to obtrude my opinion on the public, had I not have been urged thereto, by a few intimate friends. To their solicitations have I yielded; and should this

little work be conducive, in the smallest degree, to the benefit of the cause I have espoused, or meet with the approbation of the public, I shall be sufficiently remunerated for my trouble.

Mercantile pursuits having been my chief occupation in life; I trust I may be permitted to plead that excuse, for any defect in language, or any errors into which a person, unaccustomed to writing for the press, is so apt to fall.

*LONDON,*  
*17th March, 1811.*







# LETTER,

&c. &c.

---

*To the Right Hon. SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, Bart. M: P.*

SIR,

WITH peculiar pleasure I noticed your appointment as a Member of the Committee to enquire into the present state of commercial Credit, by the Honorable the House of Commons, and I have been induced to address you from the belief, that such an investigation could not fail of leading into, and confirming some of the Opinions, which you have been pleased to express to the Public, on "The Report of the Bullion Committee," the final result of which is looked for with much anxiety by the mercantile branch of the community.

From the trouble you have taken to refute the doctrines contained in that Report, I am convinced, that it is your intention to oppose the

B

measures which are likely to be further recommended by the Committee to the Honorable the House of Commons.

The Report of the Bullion Committee has been so fully, and so ably discussed by yourself and others, that what I am about to state, may possibly be deemed superfluous. I am aware, Sir, that my abilities are incompetent to the task I have undertaken; nevertheless, I cannot refrain from troubling you with my ideas on a subject which has so justly excited the attention of all classes.

I wish it not to be thought that I have any thing particularly novel to offer to your notice; you have left but little to explain; I can only corroborate your opinions by observations made as a merchant during an experience of 42 years on the Royal-Exchange of London, and should you be enabled to glean from these Items, any thing likely to benefit the cause which you have so generously and so nobly advocated, my utmost wishes will be accomplished.

As a mercantile man, you must naturally suppose that I felt alarmed at the publication of the opinions expressed in "the Report of the

“ Bullion Committee.” In consequence whereof, I was prompted in August last to write to Sir CHARLES PRICE, Bart. M. P. on the subject of the report, and the recommendations therein contained ; and, that you may have a just conception of the ideas I then had, I take the liberty of prefacing my present remarks with a copy of that letter.

‘ LONDON, 24th August, 1810.

‘ To SIR CHARLES PRICE, Bart. M. P.

‘ SIR,

‘ Having some remarks to make on  
 ‘ the Report of the Committee appointed by the  
 ‘ Honorable the House of Commons on the high  
 ‘ price of Bullion, I cannot address them to a  
 ‘ more proper person than yourself, being one  
 ‘ of the representatives of the city of London  
 ‘ (and president of the Society of Merchants trading to the Continent, a situation you have filled  
 ‘ with so much zeal and judgement) and from  
 ‘ the great experience you have acquired in mercantile transactions being most fully competent  
 ‘ to form a correct judgement as to the merits of  
 ‘ this epistle, which should you deem worthy of  
 ‘ note, you are at full liberty to make what use  
 ‘ of it you think proper.

‘ The scarcity of Bullion, and in particular  
 ‘ Gold, is occasioned in my opinion, only by the  
 ‘ Exchange with foreign parts being against this  
 ‘ country, and not by the great quantity of Bank  
 ‘ of England Notes in circulation.

‘ Mr. Goldsmid, a bullion broker, informed  
 ‘ the Committee at his examination, “ that large  
 “ sums were exported about four months ago, but  
 “ that the exportation since had considerably de-  
 “ creased ;” ‘ the reason is, that four months ago  
 ‘ the exchange with Paris was from 19 livres to  
 ‘ 19 10 Tournois for one pound sterling ; it is  
 ‘ now 21 10 consequently the profit is about 10  
 ‘ per cent. less to export Gold than it was at that  
 ‘ period.

‘ Sir Francis Baring stated to the Committee,  
 “ that during the American war there was no  
 “ scarcity of Bullion in this country, because  
 “ there were no restrictions on Trade ;” ‘ I will  
 ‘ add, that the trade being then open with France,  
 ‘ and the whole Continent, the Exchange with  
 ‘ the different towns in Europe kept at par, or  
 ‘ rather favorable to this Country, consequently  
 ‘ there was no profit in exporting Bullion ; on  
 ‘ the contrary, when the Exchange was in favor  
 ‘ of England, which was generally the case, Bul-

‘ lion was received in lieu of Bills of Exchange  
 ‘ to purchase goods of all descriptions. Sir  
 ‘ Francis also stated, “ that the too great circu-  
 “ lation of Paper was one of the causes of the  
 “ scarcity of Bullion; for in the year 1797 the  
 “ amount of Bank of England Notes was eleven  
 “ millions, and last Sessions a document was pre-  
 “ sented to the House of Commons by which it  
 “ appeared that the sum then in circulation  
 “ amounted to twenty-one millions.” ‘ Can any  
 ‘ body be surprised at this augmentation, consi-  
 ‘ dering,

‘ *First*, That Government pays annually above  
 ‘ seventy Millions for the expences of the nation,  
 ‘ and that, the greatest part paper.

‘ *Secondly*, That the Bank holds several  
 ‘ Millions of Exchequer Bills; and,

‘ *Thirdly*, That the Bank has been in the  
 ‘ habit, of late years, of making all payments for  
 ‘ the Holders of the Loan, except the first two,  
 ‘ and the last.

‘ The amount of Bank of England Notes in  
 ‘ circulation, for Notes and Bills of Exchange  
 ‘ discounted by the Bank, I really believe, does  
 ‘ not exceed, in proportion to the increase of

‘ trade, what it was before the 27th February,  
‘ 1797.

‘ I have no authority to say so ; the Bank  
‘ Directors alone know, whether my conjectures  
‘ are right or wrong.

‘ I am sorry to differ in opinion with so  
‘ respectable and intelligent a Merchant as Sir  
‘ Francis Baring ; but I am certain, that the  
‘ great mass of Bank of England Notes at  
‘ present in circulation, is not the cause of the  
‘ scarcity and high price of Bullion ; and I will  
‘ endeavour to prove, that the present Course of  
‘ Exchange with Foreign Parts, and not the  
‘ quantity of Paper in circulation, is the true  
‘ Cause of this great export of Bullion, and  
‘ which has made it so scarce and dear.

‘ The Bank ceased to pay in specie the 27th  
‘ February, 1797 ; the Exchange on Hambro’ the  
24th of that month was 36 0 for £1 sterling  
28 ..... 35 10  
3rd March ..... 34 9 (3 per cent. fall)  
7 ..... 35 1 (recovering)  
14 ..... 36 0

‘ and it continued rising gradually in favor of  
‘ England, to the 15th September of the same

‘ year ; when it was as high as 38, which is 15  
 ‘ per cent. above par, in favor of this Country ;  
 ‘ this Exchange induced many Merchants to  
 ‘ import Gold and Silver to a great amount, every  
 ‘ Packet which came from Cuxhaven, (two every  
 ‘ week) bringing to Yarmouth, from 50 to  
 ‘ £80,000 sterling, besides imports from Holland.  
 ‘ The Bank Directors can bear testimony of this  
 ‘ fact, as well as the Underwriters at Lloyd’s,  
 ‘ who wrote the Sea risks.

‘ By this Sir, you will perceive, that although  
 ‘ the Bank discontinued paying in specie, England  
 ‘ kept her credit unimpaired, as appears by the  
 ‘ Exchange continuing in favor of this Country,  
 ‘ and immense sums arriving almost daily, for  
 ‘ many months after the Bank had ceased paying  
 ‘ in specie.

‘ Let Government encourage the Trade with  
 ‘ France, and the whole Continent, as much as  
 ‘ is consistent with the politics of this country,  
 ‘ and the Exchange will rise gradually to par,  
 ‘ and by degrees as high as we have seen it on  
 ‘ Paris, viz. 26 and even 27 livres for the £1  
 ‘ sterling: then the Bullion exported will return,  
 ‘ and, as a proof of what I advance, that a free  
 ‘ Trade with France and the rest of the Continent,



' is the best remedy to raise the Exchange;—I beg  
 ' leave to remind you, that since the French  
 ' Government granted licences to export Corn to  
 ' this Country, with leave to import into France  
 ' certain goods, the consequence has been, that  
 ' the exports from this Country, being of a greater  
 ' value than the imports, occasioned the necessity  
 ' of drawing Bills on Paris for the balance, and  
 ' the exchange which was before the arrival of  
 ' Corn, at 19 10 for £1 sterling, got up to 22;  
 ' (an increase of 13 per cent.) lately ships with  
 ' licences being scarce, the Exchange has fallen  
 ' to 21. 5.

' The Committee made the following decla-  
 ' ration; "*That it is a great practical error to*  
 "*suppose that the Exchange with Foreign Coun-*  
 "*tries, and the price of Bullion, are not liable*  
 "*to be affected by the amount of a paper currency,*  
 "*&c. &c.*"

' I am sorry to differ in opinion with such  
 ' high authority as the Honorable Committee;  
 ' but, I think I have already proved, that the  
 ' amount of paper in circulation, is not the cause  
 ' of the high price of Bullion; the unfavorable  
 ' state of Exchange alone it is, that produces the  
 ' great Export of Gold. Exporting of Foreign

' Gold at the present high price of £4 10s. per  
 ' ounce; to have returns in Bills on London,  
 ' leaves 5 per cent. nett profit.

' On the recommendation of the Committee  
 ' to the House, to pass a bill, to oblige the Bank  
 ' to pay in Specie two years after the date of the  
 ' said bill; my opinion is, that it would be the  
 ' most dangerous method that could be devised,  
 ' I am certain, should it ever take place while the  
 ' Exchange remains as low as it now is, that  
 ' three fourths of the Guineas issued by the Bank,  
 ' would not remain long in this Country: the  
 ' reason is obvious, a Guinea sells in France for  
 ' 26 livres; with this, a Bill on London could be  
 ' purchased at 21 livres, for £1 sterling, yielding  
 ' a profit of about 18 per cent.

' Were the Legislature to make the expor-  
 ' tation of Guineas, felony, I really believe there  
 ' would be men avaricious enough to run the risk  
 ' of their lives for the sake of gain; might not  
 ' such men use the crucible, and by that means  
 ' melt down Guineas into ingots, alloying the  
 ' same to alter the standard? An oath before the  
 ' Court of Aldermen, would, I believe, enable  
 ' them to sell the ingots so made, as foreign  
 ' Gold, and exportation of course would follow.

' Goods or Provisions cannot be bought  
 ' cheaper with Guineas than Bank Notes, why  
 ' then compel the Bank to issue Guineas, that are  
 ' not actually wanted, especially if there is a  
 ' chance of their being exported?

' My opinion is, that the Legislature cannot  
 ' do better than to leave the issuing of Gold to  
 ' the discretion of the Bank Directors. Circum-  
 ' stances might dictate to their judgment a partial  
 ' issue; for example, to pay in Gold when the  
 ' Exchange with Foreign Parts was at par, or  
 ' above; for when that occurs, there would be  
 ' no fear of the export of English Coin, as no  
 ' profit would accrue by so doing.

' I beg to observe, that the evil attending  
 ' Country Banking, might, in my opinion, be  
 ' greatly obviated by the Bank being permitted  
 ' to open offices in various parts of the country,  
 ' for the accommodation of the Merchants and  
 ' Manufacturers.

' Trusting that you will excuse this long  
 ' address, I beg leave to subscribe myself, res-  
 ' pectfully, Sir,

' Your obedient humble Servant,

' An old Member of the Society  
 ' of Merchants trading to the  
 ' Continent.'

From the perusal of the foregoing letter, you will perceive that my opinions were in unison with your own. The cause of the scarcity of Bullion, and the effects likely to be produced by adopting the measures recommended by the Bullion Committee, as a removal of that scarcity, were only treated on by me in a mercantile point of view; to your transcendent abilities has the task devolved of elucidating the true principles of our political economy; and, without flattery, I assert that your publication ought to be considered as a national good, having caused a quiescence in the public mind, of which it stood so much in need from the alarm created by the ill timed Report of the Bullion Committee.

To proceed to the subject which has again tempted me to take up my pen, I must observe, that only lately have I perused Mr. Huskisson's pamphlet, intitled, "The Question concerning the depreciation of the Currency, &c."

Words cannot express my surprise on reading the pamphlet above alluded to! In a comparative sense, the Report of the Bullion Committee may be deemed the Child of Mr. Huskisson; for, like a tender parent, he maintains and defends it through all its errors. Nor can I refrain from

thinking his publication, though in some parts of it not deficient in elegance of style ; yet, on the whole, an assemblage of abstruse phrases, tending to alarm the public mind, and to destroy the foundation of the social compact.

The visionary dreams of theorists, have lately been too fatally acted upon in a neighbouring country ; and shall we also follow the example, by adopting a system that could not fail of bringing upon this happy land, anarchy and all its dreadful concomitants ?

We have, however, a pledge that such will not be the case at the present moment : the good sense of the Public, expressed in the general disapprobation which followed the Report of the Bullion Committee, is a strong proof, that our Paper Currency is not depreciated.

I shall now endeavour to comment upon such parts of Mr. Huskisson's Pamphlet, as I think really bears on the point.

I pass over Mr. Huskisson's definition of money, being fully satisfied, that enough has been written, (independent of practice) to convince the Public, what money really is.

Page 12 and 13, Mr. Huskisson says,

“ A pound, or twelve ounces of Gold, by the  
 “ law of this country, is divided into forty-four  
 “ guineas and a half, or £46 14s. 6d.

“ A pound of Gold, therefore, and £46 14s. 6d.  
 “ being equivalent, being, in fact the same thing  
 “ under different names, any circulating credit  
 “ which purports to represent £46 14s. 6d.  
 “ ought, by the law of this country, to be ex-  
 “ changable at will for a pound of Gold.

“ But the sum of £46 14s. 6d. in our pre-  
 “ sent paper, will procure in exchange for Gold,  
 “ only  $10\frac{1}{4}$  ounces of that metal;—a pound of  
 “ Gold is now exchangeable for £56 in Paper  
 “ Currency. Any commodity, therefore, which  
 “ is equivalent to a pound of Gold, is also equiva-  
 “ lent to £56 in Paper.

“ It follows, that the difference between  
 “ £56, and £46 14s. 6d. or between 12 and  
 “  $10\frac{1}{4}$  ounces of Gold arises from the depre-  
 “ ciation of the Paper; and is the measure of  
 “ that depreciation, as well with respect to Gold,  
 “ the universal equivalent, as to every other com-  
 “ modity.”

In reply.—The difference which exists between a pound of Gold and £56 in Bank Notes, originates from *Scarcity*, which at all times will enhance the value of *an Article*. Ought it then to be a matter of surprize, that Gold, (which is to all intents *an article of Merchandize*) is dearer, especially as the cause of that demand, and consequent scarcity, is occasioned by circumstances resulting from a political and commercial state of things not to be avoided?

Page 19 and 20.

“ The existing evil is indefinite, uncertain and  
 “ fluctuating, though progressive in its growth.  
 “ It has consequently a greater tendency to *dis-*  
 “ *range and unsettle all the transactions of society,*  
 “ *and to depress the labouring classes,* and all who  
 “ derive their incomes from salary or wages of  
 “ any description.

“ A saving, it is true, accrues to the state  
 “ from paying the wages of *valour, talent, indus-*  
 “ *try, and labour, in a depreciated Currency,* and  
 “ from the reduction which is thus made (*really,*  
 “ *though not nominally*) in the value of the divi-  
 “ dend paid to the public creditor. But it is  
 “ equally true, that these unfair and unintended  
 “ savings to the State, are more than counterba-

“ lanced by its increased expenditure ; whilst this  
 “ *increased expenditure, and the increased taxation*  
 “ *necessarily consequent upon it, doubly aggravate*  
 “ *the evil on those classes of the community, at whose*  
 “ *expenditure these savings are made, by taking from*  
 “ *each a greater proportion of their already depre-*  
 “ *ciated income, for the payment of all the other*  
 “ *charges of the State.*”

If the language which I here recite, had been copied from the MONITEUR, it would have been perused without alarm. But when such words come from a gentleman like Mr. Huskisson, their authority cannot fail of striking, and alarming those of the lower and middling classes, who have not the ability of looking into the *real and natural Causes* which now operate on the price of Bullion.

England's inveterate Enemy could not be more ardently gratified, than by the promulgation of these tenets. The full belief of them by *Valour, Talent, Industry, and Labor*, could not fail of reducing us to the degradation so much wished for by the French Government.

Page 22.

“ Mr. Chambers plainly avows, that he does  
 “ not conceive *Gold to be a fairer standard for*  
 “ *Bank of England Notes,* than *Indigo and Broad*



“ *Cloth*, and that a One Pound Note does not  
 “ represent Twenty Shillings of that metal at the  
 “ coinage price.”

Corroborative of Mr. Chambers’s opinion, that Gold is not a fairer standard for Bank of England Notes, than Indigo or Broad Cloth, I beg leave to state, that Bullion and Foreign Coin, to an immense amount, was imported into this country in 1797 and 1798, the Exchange with Foreign Parts being greatly in our favor. What then did the importers do with the immense sums they received from the Continent? Why, they exchanged them at the Bank for Notes, with which they could trade, and enter into speculations more likely to turn to their advantage, than by locking up the precious metal in their private coffers.

Mr. Huskisson should first explain the *real cause* why a Pound Note does not now represent twenty shillings in Gold. He believes, and would wish others to believe, that the cause originated in an excess of paper currency, and a consequent depreciation.

The amount of Bank of England Notes in circulation in the month of June last, did not I

believe exceed the present amount. The exchange on Paris was then at 22 livres for £1 sterling; (being 9 per cent. against this Country) the Exchange is now 17 Livres for £1 Sterling, (being 30 per cent. against this country.) *How happens this difference without an additional issue of Bank Notes?* The amount of our Paper Currency cannot therefore affect our Exchange. *Our Imports from the Continent, exceeding our Exports,* contributes in a great measure to cause this difference of Exchange; for whilst there are more purchasers of Bills, than drawers, the latter will always give less Livres Tournois for the Pound Sterling.

The non-exportation of goods to the Continent, will probably continue; as the French Licences, which allow for a time the importation of certain articles into France, are nearly expired, and no new ones likely to be granted.

Remove the restrictions on Commerce.—*Restore our balance of trade with the Continent,* (permitting the Directors of the Bank of England, to pursue the mode of conduct so judiciously adopted by them for so long a period back, and which has been so productive of benefit to themselves and to the country,) and Gold will find its

par. The idea of depreciation in our Paper Currency, so long as it purchases for us every article of Trade, every necessary and comfort of life, on equal terms with our Gold Coin, is only chimerical.

Page 23.

“ Gold in this Country is really and exclu-  
 “ sively the fixed measure of the rising and fall-  
 “ ing value of all other things in reference to  
 “ each other ; the article itself, which forms this  
 “ standing measure, never can rise or fall in value  
 “ with reference to this measure,—that is, with  
 “ reference to itself.”

Page 24.

“ By an increase or diminution, the value of all  
 “ other things (the quantity of those other things  
 “ and the demand for them continuing the same )  
 “ would be increased or diminished in the same  
 “ proportion, with reference to Gold.”

If this assertion were founded on a true system, all articles would have risen as Gold enhanced in price, and in exact proportion.

Can this be reconciled to fact? Are not many articles cheaper now than they were 30 years back,—or at the period when the Bank paid in Specie, and Gold Bullion was at the Standard or Mint Price? It is admitted by Mr. Huskisson,

that the depreciation of a Currency may arise from other Causes.

In lieu of this abstract reasoning used by the said Gentleman, it has been proved from facts, stated by the most respectable authority, that the present high price of Gold Bullion, originates from political and commercial causes, which time and a change of circumstances *on the Continent*, only can remedy.

Excess of a Paper Currency will certainly depreciate its value in reference to the current Coin,—instance France, Russia, &c.; and although Mr. Huskisson's arguments in note to page 114 of his pamphlet, are very strong, and apparently to the point, I deny that Bank of England Notes are to be compared to the Rouble of Russia, or the more contemptible Assignats of France; such *paper Money has only the security of a despotic Government, and is issued to any amount at its command.* The Bank of England has a *real Capital*, and although our Government (which must not be compared to either the Government of France or Russia) is indebted to the Bank eighteen millions, and sanctions the issue of its paper, yet I believe, that if the Bank were to cease discounting for *seventy days*, and be refunded

the amount advanced to Government on Exchequer Bills, that enough Bullion would be found in the Bank to take up the whole of its Notes ; however I believe none but the Bank Directors who have passed the Chair, are acquainted with the actual amount of Bullion in their possession ; as conclusive on this point, I cannot but quote the following observation, which you have so justly made ;

That “The issuing of Paper by Corporations  
 “ erected for that especial purpose is therefore by  
 “ far the most eligible plan, any abuse of this  
 “ privilege, will be checked by Government,  
 “ whereas no Government will check any enormity  
 “ of its own issuing.”

Mr. Huskisson’s Pamphlet, Page 26.

“ The existing depreciation therefore must  
 “ be occasioned by excess.”

Before this can be admitted as applicable to the present state of this Country, Mr. Huskisson should prove that we *really have an excess of currency* ; again I must quote your own words.

“ The instant any superfluous issue is made,  
 “ it reverts upon the Bank, for no individual,  
 “ particularly any person conversant in business,

“ will ever think of keeping in his possession any  
 “ paper for which he has no occasion, and on  
 “ which he would be paying an interest of Five  
 “ per Cent.”

As a further proof, that no excess of currency exists, and that even an augmentation to the present amount is requisite, I would wish it to be remembered, that within these few years nearly the whole Maritime Commerce of the World has centred in Great Britain.—Why is Government now about assisting the Merchants with Loans on the produce stored in this Country, waiting for a Market? It would be the height of folly to suppose, that the relief which is likely to be given to the Merchants with one hand, should be withdrawn by the other; for to pass an Act, compelling the Bank of England to restrict its issues, or curtail its discounts, would in reality have such an effect. The issue of a less quantity of Bank Notes would also influence the Funds, and the negotiation for Loans,—it having been the custom for years past, for the Bank to make all payments for the holders, except the first two, and the last. Should this accommodation cease, (which of course it would) the Loans would be taken at reduced prices, and be greatly detrimental to the public good.

Page 26. “ If the circulation of any  
 “ Country were performed exclusively by Gold,  
 “ and the supply of that Metal in such Country  
 “ were, from any imaginable cause doubled, whilst  
 “ the quantity of Gold and the demand for it  
 “ should continue the same in all other parts of  
 “ the world, the value of Gold in such Country  
 “ would be diminished. This diminution in the  
 “ value of Gold would appear in the propor-  
 “ tionate rise of all Commodities; but Gold  
 “ being so much cheaper in the Country in which  
 “ its quantity had been thus increased, it would  
 “ be bought by other Countries, and exported  
 “ from that Country, till its value was restored  
 “ again to a level in the different parts of the  
 “ world.”

“ Mr. Huskisson has before said, that *Gold is really and exclusively the fixed measure of the rising and falling value of all other things in reference to each other. The article itself, which forms this standing measure, can never rise or fall with reference to itself.*

If Gold be the *universal equivalent* which can *never rise or fall with reference to itself*, how can it be *cheaper* in one country than another? To purchase it, an equivalent must be given; it

follows therefore, that any country thus situated, *must import Goods* (whether in need of them or not, for it cannot be imagined that they would merely exchange Coin) to restore the value of its currency.

Supposing Goods are not *wanted*, or are not *suffered to be imported*, then the *depreciation must be in the value of the metal*; if that is once admitted in *any case*, *Gold cannot be the fixed measure of the rising and falling value of all other articles*. The apparent rise of commodities in the present case, would be only *nominal*.

This strained mode of argument, here introduced by Mr. Huskisson, is only to support his theory, that—from an excess of Currency our Bank Paper is depreciated, and that all commodities are advanced in proportion to such depreciation.—It is true, that our Bank Notes are not an exportable commodity; for that and other reasons, they have a preference in many instances to coin. The more a circulating medium is retained in a Country, the more likely is that country to flourish.—Abundance of Currency invigorates Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce, the true resources of a nation.



In page 32, Mr. Huskisson asserts, that in consequence of the profits of the Bank depending on the amount of their issues, it was their interest at all times, to make these issues as large as possible ; and concludes, that the Public had a sufficient security, that those issues should not be carried to excess, by having the power of demanding Gold, in lieu of the Notes so issued.

If the Bank Directors had a *controul over the Imports from the Continent* ; or, in other words, could keep *the Trade of this Country with the Continent, on a par*, the Foreign Exchanges would also be at *par*, and Gold would continue at the standard or mint price. If therefore, the Bank Directors have *no such influence on the Trade of the Continent*, and consequently, *no influence on the Exchange*, how unjust would it be, to compel them to pay in Gold, which would subject them to such ruinous losses, and with the certainty, that nearly the whole of their issue so made in Gold, would be exported to the Continent. When the Exchanges are at *par*, or above, Mr. Huskisson's desire might be complied with ; although I am convinced, that it would not be attended with such beneficial effects as he has anticipated.

Page 38.

“ ‘This check’ (the payment in Gold) “was  
 “ constantly ready to be applied, if, in conse-  
 “ quence of an over issue, ‘the value of Bank  
 “ Notes was reduced, ‘or likely to be reduced,  
 “ below par in reference to the price of bullion,  
 “ either here, or in the other parts of Europe ;  
 “ the circulation of the bank of England being,  
 “ in this respect, to that of Europe, what the  
 “ circulation of a country bank is now to that  
 “ of the bank of England.”

This argument is plausible enough, if the foreign drawers of bills of exchange on England, could receive Guineas in return.—But why argue for a thing contrary to law? Guineas cannot be exported; nor would it be politic to admit of their exportation; independent of the effect which the Exchange, as it now stands, would continually be producing. If Guineas were to be issued, and suffered to be exported to pay off the whole of our Foreign Debt, the Exchanges would be at par; but the instant we became indebted to the Continent, (which would of course follow, if our imports were to exceed our exports) the Exchange would in such proportion be against us, and we should find ourselves in a worse situation than we are at present, as there would be less Gold in the Country.

E

“ The explanations which have been offered by  
 “ those who have endeavored to shew that the high  
 “ price of Gold in England is not connected with  
 “ any excess in the issue of Bank paper, are,

“ *First*, That the immediate and operative  
 “ cause is a great scarcity of Gold, and a conse-  
 “ quent demand for it, on the Continent. And

“ *Secondly*, That Speculation in the purchase  
 “ of it in this Country has been carried, and is still  
 “ going on, to a very great extent, in consequence  
 “ of the Course of Exchange with the Continent  
 “ having been for the last two years, and still con-  
 “ tinuing, so much against this Country.  
 “ *In these explanations every thing is assumed.*”

How can Mr. Huskinsson say that in these explanations every thing is assumed ?

The evidence given before the Committee by the most intelligent and respectable Merchants is a plain Statement of Facts, corroborated by *experience*. I believe it has never been stated to the Committee, that Gold was *dear and scarce on the Continent*. The Scarcity in this Country was created by speculators exporting it to the Continent

for returns in Bills of Exchange, by which a considerable Gain was obtained ;—at the present day for example,

One Ounce of exportable Gold would

Cost in London .....	£4	16	0
Freight, Insurance, &c. about .....	0	4	0
	<hr/>		
	£5	0	0
	<hr/>		

This would sell in Paris for 96 Livres (or £4 Sterling, reckoning the Exchange at 24 or par) with which a Bill on London may be purchased at the Exchange of 17 Livres for £1 Sterling, or £5 13s. netting a Profit of 13 per Cent.

Gold in the present instances is, therefore, *an article of Merchandize*, as Sugar and Coffee. To the clandestine exporter of our Gold Coin greater benefits accrue.

#### Page 57.

“ An exchange of equivalents is the foundation of all commerce ; no nation therefore, can permanently export to a greater value than it imports, as far as exports and imports are created by a commercial intercourse with other nations.”

On the subject of Equivalents, I would ask, how are we to pay the Continent the value of our

imports from thence; as, Corn, Hemp, &c.? The balance of payments against us, must be liquidated either by Bullion, Goods, or Bills of Exchange, negotiated at unfavourable exchanges, from the want of competition in the Foreign Bill Markets.

On the subject of the Balance of Trade, I have to observe, that the Balance of Trade may be in favor of a Country, and yet the Exchange be against it; such is the present state of Russia: the Exchange is about 75 per Cent. against that Country, although the exports exceed the imports. The depreciation is only felt by the holders of the *Paper Rouble, issued by the Government*, which, from the *want of public confidence*, is only negotiable at about 12 pence English; whereas the Silver Rouble is negotiated at its standard, or about 48 pence English. Payment of Foreign Bills of Exchange on Russia, with the Silver Rouble, is effected at par, or rather in her favor; whereas, payment of Foreign Bills of Exchange on England, is equally detrimental, whether paid in Specie or Bank Notes. Gold has *really risen* in price, in consequence of the Balance of Trade being against us. In Russia, Specie has *not risen*; the Paper Money only, causing the difference in the Exchange.

Mr. Huskisson asserts, that the annual Balance of Trade is in our favor. He draws these conclusions from the total amount of Goods exported to the East and West Indies, United States of America, Brazil, Buenos Ayres, Lima, &c.

Admitting the *general* exports to be correct; still, those to the new world cannot *influence the Exchanges of the Continent; the Balance of Trade with the latter being against us.* A deduction ought to be made for the immense value of Goods now in Sicily, Malta, Heligoland, &c. remaining for a Market. The Exchanges are also materially affected by the immense sums going out of this Country, for the support of our armies in Portugal, Spain, &c. which must be paid for, either by supplies sent them in Bullion; or by Bills of Exchange, drawn by them on the Treasury here.

Page 72.

“ For Coin we have substituted a Paper  
 “ Currency; which, from being *issued to excess*,  
 “ and from that cause only, no longer represents  
 “ the quantity of Gold which it purports to re-  
 “ present.”

In no one instance has Mr. Huskisson proved that we have an *excess of Currency.* *If excess*

*alone caused a depreciation in its value when measured with Gold, or that £46 14s. 6d. in Gold, was equal to £56 in Bank Notes; it follows, that by a greater issue of Notes, an increased depreciation must take place, when measured with Gold; that a curtailment of Paper issue, must tend to restore its relative value with Gold; or that the amount of Paper issue remaining the same, that Gold could not vary in price.*

Presuming that the amount of Bank Notes in circulation in the month of June last, was the same as in the month of December last, how happens it that exportable Gold decreased in value at least 7 per Cent. The *supposed over issue and depreciation* of Bank Notes, when measured with Gold, must therefore arise from some other Cause.

The reason why exportable gold decreased in value since June last, is, in my opinion, to be attributed,

*First,* To the amount of Debt due by this Country to the Continent, having been considerably liquidated; and

*Secondly,* To the want of confidence in the mercantile establishments on the Continent, arising

ing out of the unnatural restrictions on Commerce, rendering speculation in returns of Bills of Exchange a greater hazard.

If it were possible to stop the Imports from the Continent altogether, or only suffer them to enter this country *ad valorem*, or in proportion to the Exports from hence to the Continent, (as is now the case in France with the trade carried on by licences with this Country) the Exchanges would remain at par, or nearly so,—Gold would cease to be *an article of merchandize* and the public mind would no longer be fretted with the *bubble of a supposed depreciation* in our currency. Bank of England Notes, so long as they do not exceed the *real* wants of the Nation, cannot be said to be an evil. In the way of trade, Profit (not loss) arises from them. With Bank Notes *Gold like any other article of Merchandise* can be lawfully bought, sold and a profit now gained of 13 per Cent. as before stated.

Page 90 and 91.

“ The only way to stop the Exportation of  
 “ Gold is that the Bank should give the Market  
 “ Price and revive the use of it in circulation.  
 “ If that price be 90s. per ounce, 90s. must be  
 “ given ; but, in proportion as the value of their



“ Notes in circulation shall be raised by the  
 “ gradual withdrawing of the present excess,  
 “ that price will diminish until it shall be re-  
 “ stored to the mint price, and their notes con-  
 “ sequently to par.

“ On the other hand if the excess of Bank  
 “ paper shall continue progressively to increase,  
 “ 90s. will soon cease to be a sufficient price for  
 “ an ounce of Gold ; and either more must be  
 “ given, or it will continue to be carried to other  
 “ markets.

“ The difference between the market and  
 “ the mint price, it true, will be just so much loss  
 “ to the Bank upon all the Gold which they may  
 “ now buy, whenever they shall resume Cash pay-  
 “ ments but it is equally true, that this difference  
 “ is at this moment just so much loss to the hol-  
 “ ders of their notes, and that the latter have no  
 “ chance of that compensation which the Bank  
 “ has so amply secured to itself, by the increased  
 “ amount of its issues since the Restriction.”

So long as the Exchange remains at the present rate, it would be madness to compel the Bank to pay in Guineas.—The following example will shew the great profit that actually accrues to a person clandestinely exporting Guineas to

France. One Guinea sells in France, for melting, for 26 Livres; purchasing with that sum a Bill of Exchange on London, at the present Course of Exchange (17 Livres for £1 Sterling) the said Guinea would produce £1 10s. 7d. Sterling, or 45 per Cent.

The issuing of Guineas in time of Peace; or when our Manufactures and Colonial Produce could find their way to the Markets of the Continent, would not be attended with danger, as at present: but I still maintain, that the with-holding of such Gold issue, would tend to assist and force our Exportation of Goods.

Page 98.

*“ If a supply ” (of Gold) “ be necessary for  
“ for our circulation, it must be procured, and  
“ may be procured, by an Exchange of other  
“ Commodities which we can spare.”*

Mr. Huskisson should point out *the way to exchange our commodities for Gold.* By so doing he would *restore the Balance of Trade.* Bullion would be no longer *scarce or dear.* The Bank would be enabled to comply with his wishes, and, according to his theory, Bank of England Notes would no longer be at a discount. To assert, that a supply of Gold is necessary for our circulation,

and that it *may be procured*, without stating by *what means*, is useless; and can only be compared to the assertion that, we have an *excess of Currency*, without proving it.

Page 113.

“ I may however further observe, that Gold  
 “ does not form the basis of the Currency of any  
 “ other Country;—that the quantity of Gold in  
 “ Europe, is not less now, and is probably greater  
 “ than it was at any former period;—that the  
 “ price has not risen on the Continent;—that it  
 “ is to be purchased in the markets there.”

The chief of the Gold on the continent of Europe has centered in France, the exchange with other parts having been for a long time back in her favor; consequently the French Market would be the only one capable of supplying our wants. According to the existing laws of France, Gold either in foreign coin or ingots, once admitted, cannot be exported; so strict are these laws, that even gold-lace is prohibited from exportation; Jewellers' Gold, (and that in a manufactured state) can only be exported. Infringement of these laws is punished by confiscation and many years close confinement in irons. Bullion has oft times been clandestinely exported from France, but increase of risk, would, as a matter of course, enhance its price.

Admitting, however, that Gold could be lawfully purchased in France, I would ask Mr. Huskisson with what are we to purchase it? an *Equivalent* it is admitted must be given—we are literally shut out from the Continent. How then are we to *compel our enemy* to give us Gold in return for our *Equivalent (Goods)* which would be in proportion to the existing exchange, (30 per cent.) and consequently so much *real loss to this Country?* or, supposing the Bank were to buy through proper Agents (as recommended by Mr. Huskisson) Gold in the Foreign Markets, would not a *similar loss be felt exclusively by them?*

To purchase Louis D'ors at their value, 24 Livres (which is equal to one pound sterling) at the present Exchange of 17, the Bank would be paying about £1 8s. 2d. sterling for every such Louis D'ors so purchased, and would lose in the re-issue, upwards of £41 Sterling on every £100. Gold Bullion would be valuable proportionately with Coin.

Such a PROFITABLE trade as this to the Bank, would not fail of *convincing* the public of its STABILITY. To use your own words “The  
“ Bank of England maintains its credit and cha-  
“ racter by carrying on a profitable bussiness”

“ under a most judicious system, but if it were  
 “ to engage in great transactions by which it was  
 “ to lose 15 per cent. (now 24 per cent.) I should  
 “ be glad to know what would then be thought  
 “ of the wisdom of its Directors. In fact, the  
 “ Bank with such a burden must give up issuing  
 “ paper, nor would any one take the notes of a  
 “ Corporation that would persevere in carrying  
 “ on so ruinous a traffic.”

Mr. Huskisson's Pamphlet, page 139.

“ That a Nation like Great Britain, possessed  
 “ of great Commercial Capital, should afford  
 “ long credits to other Countries where Capital,  
 “ is wanting, and where the rate of interest is  
 “ consequently much higher, is certainly very  
 “ natural; and it is an obvious advantage to us in  
 “ Trade. But these credits are given in succes-  
 “ sion and some are daily coming to maturity,  
 “ whilst others are created; so that, although the  
 “ *different parts of the world are constantly in-*  
 “ *debted to this Country,* the aggregate amount  
 “ of those debts cannot, in the ordinary course of  
 “ things, very materially vary.

“ But it is obvious, that, if, from any pecu-  
 “ liar circumstances, an unusual facility of dis-  
 “ count exists at home, whilst abroad an advance  
 “ in price, far exceeding the rate of interest here,

“ given for goods sold upon long credits, or a  
 “ proportionate abatement made upon those  
 “ bought by us for ready money, *the Balance of*  
 “ *debt to this Country* may be somewhat increas-  
 “ ed, and the Exchange thereby rendered *unfa-*  
 “ *vorable* for a short-time.”

If the Continent were *constantly indebted to England* there would be a continued and regular demand for Bills of Exchange on England, to pay such debts, *the Balance of debt to this Country* would render the Exchange *favorable* (not unfavorable). In the Foreign Bill Markets there *now* exists an excess of paper on England, caused by the *Balance of debt due by us* to the Continent, and there being no constant or permanent demand for such paper, the purchasers as a matter of course, fix their own price, which is the depression felt. I do not think that any person possessed of *real* knowledge of our commerce with the Continent for years back, will say that the arguments of Mr. Huskisson in page 139 and 140 are applicable to the subject.

To conclude, I must express my decided opinion, that any curtailment or restriction on the Bank of England in the issue of its paper, or the compelling the Directors to pay in Gold after two years notice (under the present unprecedented state

of things) as recommended by the Bullion Committee would be attended with the most fatal consequences. Our Merchants and Manufacturers would be ruined, all classes affected, and this great Empire shaken to its very foundation. History records, that when Governments have interfered in the concerns of private companies: example, Caisse d'Escompte, French East India Company, &c. &c. that ruin generally followed.

I have now a few observations to make on the present system of Country Banks.

The holders of *their paper circulated as Money*, are often exposed to the greatest inconveniences, and sometimes to heavy losses from Bankruptcy. It is no uncommon thing to meet with one or two Banks in small towns where neither Manufactories nor business of consequence is carried on. I am fully aware that a commercial and manufacturing country, like Great Britain, stands in need of Banks in her chief Cities and Towns. Should it not be deemed prudent for the Bank of England to open Offices in various parts of the Kingdom, a similar Security to the Merchant, Manufacturer, and others, might be obtained by the mode of Banking in Lancashire; I believe the system I allude to, is not generally known.

In Lancashire, I think, there is not one Bank that issues its own Notes on demand; neither are the Notes of the adjoining counties, currently taken or received in payment. But at Manchester, for certain, when a Merchant or Manufacturer disposes of goods, he generally receives for them, Bills on London at two or three months date; these Bills are readily discounted with the Manchester Banker, who gives in return, *Bank of England Notes*. The Bills are remitted by the Banker to his House in London, and negotiated in the regular course of Business. At Manchester one Bank only, receives weekly from London upwards of £20,000 in Bank of England Notes, for the purposes before named.

For this *secure mode* of Banking and for all cash transactions the Country Banker charges  $\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. Commission.

If the first County in England for extent of Manufactures and Trade, can do *without Country Bank notes*, surely other Counties less in need of such accommodation might follow the same System with equal advantage and Security.

I beg, Sir, to apologize for having addressed you at such length. I have only taken a cursory



view of the subject ; and hope, therefore, that any imperfections or differences of opinion, you will be pleased to pardon, and to place to the right motive.

Zeal for my country's welfare, induced me to take up my pen ; and, as I before said, if in these pages you should meet with any arguments or ideas worthy your notice, or from which, good may arise, my best wishes will be realized ; confidently assured in my own mind, that your abilities are best calculated to give them the desired effect.

I have the honor to be, .

SIR,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

I. M. SIORDET,

LONDON,

15<sup>th</sup> March, 1811.

FINIS.

## POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE writing the foregoing letter, the Bank of England by the concurrence of the Right Honorable the Lords Committee of Privy Council for all matters connected with Trade, Coin, &c. have deemed it expedient, to raise the current value of the Dollar Token, from 5s. to 5s. 6d. As this regulation may, in the opinion of some, strengthen the opinions and assertions of Mr. Huskisson and his adherents; and may possibly incline others to imagine, that Bank of England Notes *are depreciated*,—I have ventured to subjoin the following additional remarks on the subject in question.

The recent measure relative to the Dollar Token, might have been anticipated; or we must have contented ourselves, with their total disappearance from our currency. An immense quantity of Silver is consumed by the manufacturers of that metal, as well for our export trade, as for our own use; which latter, has considerably increased from our enlarged population and wealth, added to the luxury and refinement of the times. It was a natural consequence, that the Dollar Token must either be current at an increased value, proportionate to the rise in the price of Silver Bullion; or be melted by the manufacturers of that metal.

The change in the value of the precious metals in a state of coinage, ought not to alarm the the public.—Such a circumstance is not without a precedent.—Ducats in Holland vary constantly in value, according to the demand; without affecting the other currency; Gold being considered there (*as it should be here*) an article of Merchandize.

The Bank Directors had cogent reasons for resorting to the late measure. Still, I cannot help expressing my regret, that a different mode of proceeding, had not been acted upon; which it will appear for the following reasons, would have been productive of the *same effect*, and *with additional advantages*;—

*First*, That it is not within the power of the Bank Directors to prevent a *further rise* in the price of Silver Bullion; which, as a matter of course *will take place*, if the *general causes* (before explained) *shall continue to operate on the value of the precious metals*; consequently 5s. 6d. will cease to be a sufficient value for the Dollar Token, and either an augmentation adequate to the rise must take place, or we must content ourselves with their disappearance from our currency, for the uses already enumerated.

*Secondly*, That the issuing of Dollars at 5s. 6d. cannot fail of eventually proving a loss to the Bank; for whenever Silver Bullion shall again fall to its original price, or standard, a loss, proportionate to that fall, must happen, which at the present rate would be about 10d. on each Dollar. The Directors of the Bank in the present case have considered the interest of the Public in preference to their own.

*Thirdly*, The primary and natural causes of this fluctuation in our currency, *not being understood* by the lower orders of society, and *not being customary*, may induce a belief, that Bank of England Notes are *really depreciated*; the prevalence of such an idea, could not fail of causing discontent in every class; commodities of every description would *then* rise, and the well placed confidence in the Bank of England, would in *reality* be shaken.

Surely every well wisher to the Country must dread such an effect, the extent of the consequences cannot be ascertained. A subversion of our good and venerable Constitution might follow, and we should have the solitary consolation to reflect, that it had been caused by too implicit a belief, in the Doctrines of Theorists, and speculative Politicians. Our fall would stand recorded for the derision of after ages, and might justly be deemed "*a political Suicide.*"

The recent event has not as yet caused the public to change their opinion of the Bank ;—no sooner did the advertisement relative to the Dollar Token become generally known, than they flocked to the shops of the silversmiths, to exchange such Dollars as were in their possession, for Bank of England Notes,—*an additional proof that they are not depreciated in the mind of the public.*

I sincerely wish I may not be prophetic : if the good sense of the public should not prevail, by confirming the well-merited opinion of the *honesty, integrity, and stability* of the Bank of England, all the evils anticipated might accrue.

The confidence so well placed, I hope will never be shaken by the *false theories* of Alarmists.

The system I have to submit, has been tried, approved of, and stamped by the *general opinion and confidence of the nation*. To be biased or bigoted by old principles, and to refuse all conviction of improvement, shews but a little mind : in every age, new systems have arose, to the complete expulsion of the old ones : cannot we trace within the memory of the present generation, many changes, which have proved highly beneficial to mankind ?—Witness, the abolition of the

Slave Trade ; the improvements in Agriculture, Chymistry, Physic, and various other Arts, too numerous to mention. Our Political economy is no doubt susceptible of similar changes and improvements ; we should not therefore be alarmed at such taking place.

As a general remedy to the evil under which the current coin of the realm at present circulates, and which arises *solely from natural causes* (which cannot be too often impressed on the mind) and which are *imposed upon us from an unprecedented state of things not to be avoided, which time alone can remove* :—with deference I submit my opinion, that the Legislature should again step forward in aid of the Bank of England, and empower its Directors to issue its Notes of the value of 5s. and 10s. each. Such a measure, aided by a small addition to our Silver Coinage in Shillings, proportionate in value to the existing rate of Bullion, could not fail of removing every impediment in our Currency.

I am sanctioned in this recommendation by the opinion expressed so far back as the year 1803, in your valuable work “the History of the Revenues, 3rd Edit. Vol. II. p. 336 and 337,” as well as by the letter which you addressed in April, 1810, to the Chairman of the Bullion Committee.

I am convinced that if the measures so wisely recommended by you, had been carried into effect, Dollar Tokens need never have been issued, nor have passed for more than five shillings.

The same security and confidence which circulated Bank Notes of £1 and £2 value, surely would be sufficient for smaller ones; the increase would not be very considerable, and might, at the option of government, be restricted to a certain amount.

This system no doubt will be strenuously opposed by the opposite side of the question, on the principle, that paper currency has no *intrinsic* value. The precious metals only received their *stamp of value*, from their scarcity, uniformity, beauty, and durability, which best fitted them for the *universal equivalent*. I hope I shall not be presuming too much, by stating, that from our insular situation, and commercial policy, (not forgetting the law of the land, which forbids exportation of our coin) we do not stand so much in need of, the *universal equivalent*, (the precious metals) for our currency.

Unanimity and confidence in our incalculable resources, cannot fail of resuscitating the energies of this land of Freedom.

I shall conclude by quoting the invaluable principles regarding Coin or Bullion, laid down by yourself, and which cannot be too often repeated.

“ The wealth of a nation properly consists  
 “ in the goods and merchandizes it possesses,  
 “ whether arising from the produce of the soil,—  
 “ from internal industry,—or from foreign commerce.

“ The precious metals, in which a part of  
 “ that wealth consists, may be described as a  
 “ species of merchandize, which, by common  
 “ consent, answers three important purposes.

*First,* “ That of enabling individuals to  
 “ receive the value of their labour, for an article  
 “ universally exchangeable.

*Secondly,* “ That of transferring property  
 “ in goods from one individual to another, without the trouble of actual barter: and

*Thirdly,* “ That of enabling the government  
 “ of a country to obtain a revenue, and to defray  
 “ the public expences; for if the Exchequer were  
 “ under the necessity of taking goods in kind,  
 “ in what manner could the various articles it



“ required be either collected, or secured till  
 “ wanted; or how could a nation fit out a fleet,  
 “ or, maintain an army, or defray the various  
 “ other expences to which it is liable.

“ It is however in early ages' of society  
 “ alone, before the credit of a government is  
 “ established, and property (whence the credit  
 “ of the individual arises) is secured, that the  
 “ precious metals exclusively answer these impor-  
 “ tant purposes.---In ages of civilization and  
 “ refinement, a well regulated paper currency,  
 “ with a small portion of these metals, in a state  
 “ of coinage, to which united the general appel-  
 “ lations of *circulation* or of *money* may be given,  
 “ is equally useful, indeed, on many accounts,  
 “ even more advantageous; and the precious  
 “ metals ought in commercial periods of society  
 “ to be accounted merely as a species of Merchan-  
 “ dize, the increase or diminution of which has no  
 “ decisive influence on the wealth or prosperity  
 “ of a Country and which if left to itself, soon  
 “ finds its just level.”

J. M. S

26th March, 1811.

**REASON *versus* PASSION;**  
OR, AN  
**· IMPARTIAL REVIEW**  
OF THE  
**DISPUTE BETWEEN THE PUBLIC**  
AND THE  
**PROPRIETORS**  
OF  
**COVENT GARDEN THEATRE:**  
WITH  
**STRICTURES**  
ON  
*Times and Morning Chronicle Newspapers:*  
COMPRISING  
**A DEFENCE OF THE COMMITTEE,**  
AND AN ATTEMPT TO SHEW, THAT HOWEVER LAUDABLE  
THE OPPOSITION MAY THINK IT, THE "RUIN OF  
MR. KEMBLE AND HIS FAMILY," WOULD NOT  
ENHANCE THE NATIONAL CHARACTER.

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*By One who Dares to Think for Himself.*

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## PREFACE.

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AN assertion is hazarded in the following sheets, that a more than ordinary degree of ignorance prevails respecting the question which is here discussed; and when we find Mr. Serjeant Best, whose acuteness in diving into the merits of any case is almost proverbial, declaring that the committee (who, be it observed, only professed to have examined the accounts of *six years*) could not possibly in the time have examined accounts of *twenty years* standing; when also we find him repeating that *very weak* argument, first brought forward by the *Times*, about the produce of the private boxes; it must be admitted that that assertion is well founded. It may be laid down as an axiom, that without a competent knowledge on any subject no man ought to give a positive opinion. Every person determined to take an active part, on either side, should ask himself this question: Is the advance on the prices an imposition, or is not? If he can satisfy himself, after reading the following pages, that it is an imposition, his duty is to resist; if not, he hurts both his own and the national character by his opposition.

But, it seems, a great number of "*admirers of the drama*" are going to dine together, Mr. Clifford in the chair. From this I reap consolation. There

every thing will be explained so satisfactorily, that we shall no longer have to complain of a lack of information. To those Gentlemen, then, I dedicate the following sheets :

“ Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors!”

With unbounded admiration of those great talents, which no doubt every one of you possess ;—with an ardent esteem for all those amiable qualities, which you have in such abundance ;—with regret that such talents and qualities should be thrown away, as they are, in this *vile kingdom*, permit me to hint, that in latitude 34° S. and longitude 151° E. there lies a tract of land, where another *Gotham* might be founded, and where I would humbly recommend that you immediately transplant yourselves, and chuse your worthy chairman *king*. Then will it be said,

“ Rejoice, ye happy Gothamites, rejoice,  
Lift up your voice on high—a mighty voice—  
The voice of gladness ; and on every tongue,  
In strains of gratitude, be praises hung :  
The praises of so great and good a king,  
Shall Clifford reign, and shall not Gotham sing ?”

Accept, Gentlemen, this trivial offering, and believe me, with the highest respect for your virtues,

THE AUTHOR.

Dec. 11, 1809.

AN  
**IMPARTIAL REVIEW,**

&c. &c.

**I**T is admitted on all hands that, in this country, the press has a vast influence over the minds of the people—that a great majority of Englishmen think, speak, and act, just as they are led to think, speak, and act, by the press, and particularly the Newspaper press; that, in other words, nine-tenths of the nation think by proxy, and throw aside as useless those reasoning faculties which the author of our being hath given us to be made use of for our benefit. It is needless to insist on the degradation to which mankind thus voluntarily submit themselves, because the few who do take the trouble to think, are already aware of it; and to endeavour to convince those who are not aware of the existence of such degradation, that is of those who never think at all, would be a hopeless task.

When we read of what are called the dark ages, when learning and knowledge were entirely confined to the clergy, and they had in consequence bound-

less sway over the public mind, we cannot help heaving a sigh of pity, not unmixed with contempt, for the victims of gross superstition; and yet how much more contemptible are we, who have all the avenues of knowledge, which to them were shut, laid open to us, and we will not deign to enter. Our state, and that of our ancestors, may be described in a few words—They were *Priest-ridden*—we are *Press-ridden*.

These preliminary remarks are called forth by a feeling of the liveliest indignation, on observing the detestable use which some of our newspaper editors have made of their undue influence over the minds, or rather the passions, of the people, and lest it should be said that this is merely declamation, without proof, I intend in the following pages to produce such evidence, as will convince the most incredulous, that the liberty of the press is abused, *and most infamously abused.*

In pursuance of what I have promised to do, I shall, in the first place, lay before the public some extracts from the *Times* newspaper, beginning so far back as October, 1868; and this shall be done, with a view to shew how the opposition to the managers of Covent Garden Theatre commenced. The discerning reader will judge for himself of the spirit of those extracts; he will not need any aid from me to discover that there is every thing

in them but fair discussion, and that they are calculated to inflame the passions without informing the mind.

There are many reasons why the Times should be honoured with precedence in this discussion. Its circulation is great, particularly in the City; it is by many considered very impartial, it is for the most part ably written, its influence is consequently extensive, its *partiality* to the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre is *well known*, and, lastly, it is almost the only paper which endeavoured to prejudge the question between the proprietors and the public; nay, all who have thought on the subject, are unanimous in ascribing to the Times the *credit* of having raised this dreadful, and as I think it will be proved, disgraceful opposition, which bids fair to bring ruin on some who deserve a better fate.

Had the writer in the Times proved, to the conviction of any reasonable person, that the advance on the admission to the Theatre was an imposition; had he proved what he asserted, that the proprietors before the advance were receiving 20 per cent. per annum on their capital; and that the New House, instead of an advance, ought to submit to an *abatement*;—had he proved these things, the opposition would have been general, and the managers must have shrunk dismayed from the con-



test; they would have been compelled to acknowledge that their cause was *bad*, and must have delivered up the management of the concern into other hands; and they would never more have dared to appear before an insulted audience of their countrymen.

These extracts from the Times shall be continued to the time of opening the new theatre, and after a few comments thereon, the reader shall be presented with some very curious paragraphs from the same paper, and others from his fellow-labourer, the Morning Chronicle; and without saying any thing more at present on that head, I will beg leave to refer the reader to the comments which will accompany each paragraph. I shall next have a few words on the *very laudable attempt* of some *admirers of the drama* to drive Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Kemble from the stage; a few words more to shew that Mr. Kemble is not *quite so great a culprit* as some *honest* men would have us believe; and lastly, shall make enquiry as to how far the present struggle is connected with politics.

But it is perhaps necessary, before I apply the dissecting knife to the Times, that some general propositions should be laid down, on which there can be no disagreement; such as *command* assent. First, then, let us see in what relative situation do the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre stand

with the public.—They are in possession of a patent empowering them to build a theatre to perform plays in, at such prices as will compensate them for their trouble, and the expence which they have incurred—Granted.—If they have been at an enormous expence in erecting a theatre, they have a right to look to the public, for whose pleasure and accommodation it has been erected, for a complete indemnification from any thing like a loss—Granted.—If then the old prices to the boxes and pit are not sufficient for that indemnification, it follows of course, that new ones must be fixed, and if those new prices are not extravagantly high, but barely sufficient to remunerate or indemnify the proprietors for the vast sums of money which they have expended, relying fully on the generosity of a British public to repay them, it follows that we should, without hesitation, submit to these prices—Granted. If these things are granted, and for the honour of my native land, I trust there are few who do not most readily subscribe to every one of them, I shall have nothing further to do than proceed, and as I proceed, prove the only thing which wants proving in the above propositions, that the old prices are too little, and the new ones barely sufficient, to remunerate the proprietors.

1. Some of the papers have mentioned, and we doubt not officially, that the intended enhancement of the theatrical prices of admission was deferred only till the opening of the new theatre, when it was added, the

great expences attendant upon so large a structure as this theatre is intended to be, would absolutely require such an addition to its receipts. Upon this reasoning we have much to say.—Upon a fair balance of receipts and payments, we do not hesitate to say, that if the *old small theatre* was the advantageous concern *we shall presently shew it to have been*, the *new large one* will cover an *abatement*, instead of demanding an increase in its price of admission.

But monopoly, *villainous monopoly*, is the bane of the present drama, and instead of having a competition of reasonably-sized theatres, where voice might be heard, and face seen, we are likely to be banished to the splendid deserts of two patented theatres, where, as there is very little but show and music that can be seen and heard, there is not likely to be any thing else that deserves to be seen and heard.—The profits of the latter season, deducting Mr. Harris's £700 a year for the management of the concern, 500*l.* of which goes to Mr. Kemble as acting manager, *we have reason to believe have not been less than 20,000*l.* a year.* *We are as much as any men anxious that the theatrical exhibitions of this town should be well rewarded.*

*Times, Oct. 4, 1808.*

2. We have for some time heard it suggested, in different ways, that the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre intend to impose on the public an advance on the admission to that theatre, and at length they have announced the opening of it with a declaration, that such a rise will be attempted.
3. With respect to their *legal right to do so, we shall not contend.* The theatre is their own; the *extraordinary monopolizing patent* is theirs, and they may open the theatre; or not, as they please, and upon *what terms they please.* At the same time it may be also said, that the

public is not obliged to frequent it if they do not approve the terms proposed ; but if *theatrical amusements are habitual to the inhabitants of the metropolis, and form a part of what may be considered as an established recreation*, and if that means of recreation is narrowed, as it has been by accidental events, the sole remaining possessors of the power of affording dramatic entertainments, certainly act with a *spirit as illiberal as it is rapacious, in taking an undue advantage of the public propensity.*— But, though the *destruction of Drury-Lane Theatre may be, and we doubt not is* an operating encouragement to the *rapacity* of the Covent Garden Proprietors, they will not let that transpire beyond the confines of their conclave. It was necessary for them to contrive some plausible reasons, which they could offer to the public, either to excite its feelings, or play upon its cullibility, or convince its justice. \* Now we cannot discern in the reasons which they have published, the least probability that John Bull's humanity can be excited, or his justice awakened, to consent to the advantages which they propose to themselves ; while the general tenor of their address is too *honest* to dupe him in his most good-humoured and unsuspecting moments.

*Times, Sept. 13, 1809.*

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*\* Address of the Proprietors.*

The proprietors having completed the new theatre within the time originally promised, beg leave respectfully to state to the public, the absolute ne-

necessity that compels them to make the following advance on the prices of admission:

First price	Boxes 7s.	Pit 4s.
Half-price	do. 3s. 6d.	do. as usual.

The Lower and Upper Galleries will remain at the Old Prices.

On the late calamitous destruction of their property, the proprietors, encouraged by the remembrance of former patronage, instantly and cheerfully applied themselves to the erection of a new theatre, solicitous only that, *without enlarging the audience-part of the edifice*, it might afford the public improved accommodation and security, and at the same time present an additional ornament to the metropolis of the British empire.

This, their most anxious wish, they flatter themselves they have solidly effected, not only within the short space of ten months, from the laying of the foundations, but under the enormously expensive disadvantages of circumstances singularly unfavourable to building.

When it is known that no less a sum than 150,000*l.* has been expended, in order to render this theatre worthy of British spectators, and of the genius of their native poets; when, in this undertaking, the inevitable accumulation of, at least, a *single* rentage is positively stated to be incurred; and when, in addition to these pressing incum-

brances, *the increased and rapidly increasing prices of every article indispensable to dramatic representations* come to be considered, the proprietors persuade themselves, that in their proposed regulation they shall be honoured with the concurrence of an enlightened and liberal public.

September 11, 1809.

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4. It is an awkward notion which we are disposed to entertain; but we cannot help thinking that there is something *very like mis-statement*, in this 150,000*l.* That such a sum has been expended, may be most true, *but did not the 50,000*l.* insured on the old theatre form a part of it?* and if so, *the actual expence is reduced to 100,000*l.**
5. Let them (the managers) economise, nor suffer actors to wear upon their backs the profits of a night to gratify private vanity.—*We could confirm these notions with some striking facts, and INCONTROVERTIBLE CALCULATIONS*, but we shall conclude at present with observing, that it was a *cunning trick* not to raise the price of the galleries, and at the same time contract their space.—*We trust, however, that the class of people who frequent the upper regions, will generously feel the imposition, though it will not, in a pecuniary point of view, affect them.*
6. We are well aware, that no pains will be spared to carry this important point; a crowd of venal applauders may be purchased—police-officers may be planted in every part of the house to thwart discontent—and *Box Street is at hand*.—If John Bull, however, should quietly submit, and be content with paying a guinea for himself, his wife, and daughter, for the boxes, without receiving the usual

*three shillings in change*, we shall only observe, that the fire in Covent Garden Theatre was a most fortunate event for the proprietors.—*It will keep them very warm at the public expence for the remainder of their lives.*

*Times, Sept. 13, 1809.*

7. The more one considers the imposition avowed by the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, the more one is convinced of its enormity.—*Their address is founded in falsehood—their object is to gull the public*; but I have a better opinion of British good sense, than to suppose it possible that it will submit to the new impost on theatrical amusements.

If the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre were influenced by just principles, if they were actuated by a spirit of fair dealing, they would have submitted a correct statement of their concerns and its affairs to the public eye, its real situation previous to the fire, and the disadvantages, if any, with which their new theatre would be opened at the old prices.—Instead of this, they come forward with an *impudent misrepresentation* of the state of their circumstances.

*Times, Sept. 14, 1809,*

from a Correspondent—*wide-print.*

8. No one who is in the least acquainted with the *tricks of trade*, can for a moment suppose that the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre are reduced by necessity to raise the prices of admission to their theatre. The “no less sum than 150,000*l.*” which is roundly stated to have been expended on the theatre, has been liquidated for them in this way :

Received of the public in 500 <i>l.</i> shares	-	75,000 <i>l.</i>
— of the Insurance Offices	-	50,000 <i>l.</i>
— by the sale of old materials	-	25,000 <i>l.</i>
		<hr/>
		£150,000

The value of the *old materials here, has certainly been too highly estimated*; but the proprietors have surely no *right to bounce out with their 150,000*l.** Granting, however, that the building has cost them a *few thousands*, have they not provided for an increased rental by their thirty-four private boxes at 400 guineas a year, instead of twelve at 300*l.*—Deduct from 14,280*l.* (the annual rent of these thirty-four private boxes) 3,600*l.* (the rent of the old twelve) and 3,750*l.* for the annual interest of the 500*l.* shares, and we find the theatre a *clear gainer of 6,930*l.** a year, for *private boxes alone*—a year or two's payment of this sum will therefore cover any expence the proprietors may have been at in the building.

9. As to the proprietors, *it is notorious that, during the run of Mother Goose, they shared 38,000*l.* per annum profit*, and, as to performers, it is equally notorious how shamefully the most eminent ~~the~~ most popular of them are overpaid. What could not managers afford to give Billington, Betty, and Catalani?

The proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre *share about 35,000*l.* at the end of every successful season.*

It is remarkable that the price of admission to the galleries is never touched, and that they can get what they please; the galleries have always been 2*s.* and 1*s.* and the abolition of the one-shilling gallery will never be an effective measure. The boxes and pit have surely as much spirit to maintain their rights as the galleries; *only the loud assertion of those rights in a theatre, is somewhat odious to politeness.* If, however, they are unanimous in their wishes, those wishes must be resistless; but we beseech them not to involve themselves in any squabbles with those who may be sent to delude them into a riot; let not any allusion to fire melt their hearts to more pity, than what may serve to carry them to the benefit of the real sufferers by that fire, whenever the *wealthy proprie-*



ters shall be pleased to appoint it.—Let them temporarily persevere, and Boxes 6s. Pit 3s. 6d.

*Times*, Sept. 15, 1809.

10. Ought they not to have laid at least some *general* account before their customers, the public, with such results as *would have established the necessity, and thereby conciliated general acquiescence?* But having done no such thing, the obvious inference is, that they had no ground of that kind to work upon.

To-night then, the theatre is to open at advanced prices, and in addition to 800 constables who are to be placed in all parts of the house, 500 of the guards are to be stationed there to keep the peace. We trust the proprietors will not be imprudent enough to let soldiers enter an English theatre.

*Times*, Sept. 18, 1809.

The preceding paragraphs were all written previous to the opening of the theatre. Whether they will be thought, on a calm investigation, to have emanated from one who was desirous that an impartial view of the question should be taken, I leave to better judges than myself. This writer admits that the proprietors had a legal right to advance the price of admission, because the extraordinary monopolizing patent is theirs. What he may mean by *ext. ordinary*, I do not know, but I really think if there were not exclusive patents granted, if as many as chose to build theatres were suffered to do it, we should find men extremely scrupulous about laying out on any one such building 150,000/.

as the number of competitors would evidently tend to the ruin of some, and the serious loss of all the rest.

How this writer could reconcile it to good breeding and gentlemanly manners, to apply such terms to the conduct of the proprietors of Covent Garden theatre as he has done, and upon such grounds too, I am at a loss to know: such terms as "*illiberal*," "*rapacious*," "*cunning trick*," &c. were, to say the least of them, very unhandsome, unless the writer of them had had something more solid than bare surmise to build upon; and how he could be so "*illiberal*" as to imagine, that the destruction of Drury-lane theatre was an operating encouragement to the rapacity of the Covent Garden proprietors, it is difficult to conceive. There is no doubt but the proprietors, for years back, have felt the necessity of an advance; but they must have been too well aware of the ungracious manner in which such a proposition would be received, and therefore judged that when such a splendid building as they have now erected was exhibited to view, it would plead their cause better than the most eloquent tongue could do. Indeed, it is preposterous to suppose that any time could be so fit for the advance as the opening of the theatre; for if they had deferred it to another season, the public would have tauntingly asked them if they were not aware, at the first opening, of the expence they had incurred.

The Times admits (generous soul!) that 150,000*l.* may have been expended, but asks if the 50,000*l.* (which, by the way, was no more than 44,500*l.*) did not form a part of it; and thus reduced the actual expence to 100,000*l.* Really there is something so impudent in this, that one is inclined to wonder how any man of common sense could write such a passage seriously. Does this writer mean to say, that the late house, with all its scenery, machinery, dresses, and decorations, was worth nothing? and if he does not, does he mean to say that it did not belong to Messrs. Harris, Kemble, &c. No! Then it was worth something, and it belonged to those gentlemen? Yes! Very well; then, my candid friend, what sum of money do you suppose it was worth? was it worth 44,500*l.* the money they received of the insurance-offices for it? Yes; and much more; or else Mr. Kemble would not have given, some years back, 22,000*l.* for one-sixth part of it. Then you must admit, that as much more as the worth of it exceeded 44,500*l.* so much must the proprietors have *lost by the fire*; and the money they received was as much their own private property as if they had received it from the sale of an estate. You need not tell me that in a few years they would have had to pull down the theatre on account of its ruinous state:—you have said so much, but whether correct or not, I declare myself totally ignorant; but my opinion is, that it is “a weak invention of the enemy.” But suppose it had been

the case, would they not have saved an immense property, which was consumed; and it is more than probable, that before they could have ventured to build another theatre, they must have calculated upon an advance, and *a greater advance than has actually taken place.*

This writer's calculation, that the private boxes would at once pay the proprietors  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on their capital, is so very silly, that it hardly deserves notice. His premises are overthrown by the observations above, and his conclusion, of course, falls to the ground. But supposing for a moment that these boxes did really produce  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on their capital, what has that to do with our argument? any tier of boxes would produce as much, and more, provided they were full every night; and thus he might assert *there is 25 per cent. on their capital.* What is the produce of these boxes, taking it at 12,500*l.* compared to the expences of the season, which are generally from 50,000*l.* to 70,000*l.*?

Now is there any person so simple as to think this writer was actually in earnest, "when he brought forward so very futile an argument? No; *he who* does think so, knows very little of the proprietor of the Times, to suppose that he would employ such a noodle in his office. But it was *intended for the public, and most likely had its desired effect.*

Respecting the manager's economising, as this gentleman wishes them to do, I shall have to notice that in another place, as also his "*striking facts and incontrovertible calculations*." His appeal to those people who generally visit the galleries, as well as that to the most grovelling and avaricious passions of John Bull, where he reminds him, that he used to receive three shillings out of a guinea where he must now pay the entire guinea, is so pitiful that it would deserve nothing but silent contempt, were it not for the mischief it is so well calculated to excite. Then comes the letter of a correspondent, and from his manner he appears to be in a terrible passion, for he deals in very big expressions, but carefully avoids all argument. He tells us, that the address of the proprietors is *founded on falsehood*; that their *object is to gull the public*; that they come forward with an *impudent misrepresentation* of the state of their circumstances, &c. How this generous-hearted correspondent of the candid Times could feel himself justified in such expressions in regard to the conduct of men, whose characters for fair dealing has never before been called in question, he will perhaps take some future opportunity of informing the public. It will not do for him to say he confided in the assertions of the Times: he ought to have thought for himself, or at least he ought to have seen some of those "*incontrovertible calculations*" before he had ventured so far. I do not know how Messrs. Harris

and Kemble might feel on the perusal of such charges as “founding an address in falsehood,” “gulling the public,” and “making impudent misrepresentations;” but if they are honourable men, which I have no reason to doubt, they must have felt a considerable degree of pain in reflecting that a respectable paper could so far degrade its columns by charges so foul, and be suffered to do it with impunity.

The paragraph, No. 8, is remarkable for nothing so much as its absurdity. The proprietors received of the public, in 500*l.* shares, 75,000*l.*; and what does he mean to infer from that?—why, I suppose, that it was *made a present of to them*. But does he not know that for that 75,000*l.* they will have to pay 5 per cent. per annum, and grant 150 free admissions, that is, one to each shareholder: so that as much as they pay over legal interest for the money borrowed, so much better would it have been for them had all the money expended come from their own pockets. The money received from the fire-offices has been under discussion before, and for the monstrous value put on the old materials, it would be an insult to common sense to notice it: so notwithstanding all this good gentleman has written, I think I have pretty well proved that the proprietors have a right to “*bounce out with their 150,000*l.**” The remaining part of this paragraph I will not notice, farther than to request the reader, if he is fond

of observing how far folly united with passion will carry some men, to look particularly into it.

When he asserts in the next paragraph, that during the run of Mother Goose the proprietors shared 38,000*l.* per annum profit, and that they share 35,000*l.* every successful season, I feel the strongest desire to see some of those “incontrovertible calculations” of his, because if he could prove such a thing, I should most willingly join in the cry against the managers, and pronounce them the greatest of impostors: unhappily to this title this doughty opponent of theirs seems to lay a weightier claim.

The extract, No. 9, is not any way remarkable, except to shew what a very inadequate idea this gentleman had of the visitors of the boxes and pit, as they have not thought it very “*obnoxious to politeness*” to “*loudly assert those rights*” which the gallery gentry were always known to possess. In the next extract, where he calls at least for some “general account,” he seems very candid, and no way unreasonable; but how he and his fellow-labourers treated the account which was laid before them, will be seen shortly: they are very like spoiled children; they cry for a toy, and when it is brought them, they are dissatisfied, and cry for others. The next and last extract before the opening of the house is beyond all praise: “Eight hundred constables, and five hundred soldiers!” Bless us, what an

army! I wonder how we contrived to make our way through them. I say *we*, because I had the supreme pleasure of a seat in the pit on that night—but it was pleasure to satiety; for I never since have ventured among those generous sons of Britain, who have continued so “loudly to assert our rights,” and who will in consequence deserve the blessings of Englishmen to the latest posterity. Who knows that, but for this magnanimous struggle, we should not at this moment have been the most abject of slaves, crouching at the feet of the universal tyrant? Who will assert, that it is not owing to this that, in a great measure, may be imputed our naval victory in the Mediterranean, as our gallant sailors would undoubtedly sympathise with their brave countrymen in the pit of Covent Garden theatre, and that would nerve their arms in such a manner as to make them irresistible. I say nothing as to how they would receive the intelligence; sympathy, delightful sympathy, exerts itself every where, and at the same moment. But though I have been led away by the warmth of my feelings in favour of the dearest idol of my adorations, liberty, I should be very glad to know what became of the 1300 constables and soldiers. In the pit they certainly were not, nor in the boxes, and I do not believe there were many of them in the galleries. There were about a dozen men in the passages of the theatre I saw as we came out, but the deuce a red coat more than are to be seen on any other night at either



house. We must therefore seek this immense army in the lively imagination of the writer in the Times.

Now the reader is conducted to that period which immediately followed the first night's performances, or rather the first night's disturbances, and he will please to peruse the comments which the Times and the Morning Chronicle, in the fervour of their zeal for the public cause, made on them.

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**FIRST NIGHT.**—After describing the tumult which had subsisted the whole of the evening, the Times continues :

11. It was a noble sight to see so much indignation in the public mind; and we could not help thinking, as Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Siddons stood on the stage, *carrying each of them 500*l.* upon their backs in clothes, that it was to feed this vanity, and to pay an Italian singer, that the public were screwed.* They, however, resented the imposition last night as became them, and the only resource they now have is, as the proprietors of the theatre take no notice of them, to take no notice of the proprietors of the theatre. Let the company play to empty benches; let the public agree to desert the theatre, and we shall soon see which can do without the other the longer. The proprietors must come down; they are overshooting their mark; competitors at low prices will be raised up on all sides; and they had better give up what in the end will be ignominiously wrested from them.

*Times, Sept. 19, 1809.*

12. We have hitherto abstained from the controversy on the advance on the prices of admission, from *various considerations*, but chiefly from the *respect which we bear for the drama*, and the inclination which we have to support every establishment that is likely to promote the intellectual entertainment of the public. It was our wish, therefore, to hear what reasons could be assigned by persons favoured by their Sovereign with an exclusive grant, for raising the price of admission to his people; and we should have acquiesced, if even a tolerable justification had been set up for the measure. *We wish the question to be fairly discussed.*

13. If those who receive an exclusive grant from the King, only as the means of better securing to the public a theatrical entertainment, can thus with impunity lock up one whole tier (the private boxes), they may lock up the whole, and make it altogether a private concern. They (the private boxes) will surely be very *desirable on account of their exclusion from the riot and obscenity of the lobbies*, and it is clear they will be a constant and fatal drawback on the property of the theatre. It is a curious argument set up for the advance in the prices, that the number of *free persons fill the theatre*, and deprive it of income. A more *insulting argument cannot be alleged*; for who made those multitudes free?—The free admission is a part of the interest which the managers pay for money; and if, *instead of building the theatre on their own capital, they are obliged to pay exorbitant interest for money*, are they to plead this as an excuse for laying a tax upon the public.

*Morning Chronicle, Sept. 19, 1809.*

*It was no doubt a noble sight for the editor of the Times:* men are always pleased when any favourite scheme succeeds; and certainly, if we may judge from the extracts which I have made from that paper, it was the earnest wish of the editor, that an opposition, right or wrong, should be raised against the managers; whether it was to gratify private vanity, or not, I will not pretend to say, that Mrs. Siddons' and Mr. Kemble's dresses in Lady Macbeth and her husband, were so superb. Perhaps the Times would rather see them hung round with painted paper, like the chimney-sweepers on a May-day, than each of them 500*l.* on their backs in clothes. Respecting this sum of 500*l.* I feel scrupulous in giving entire credit to it, after what we have seen of the Times's "incontrovertible calculations." But, surely there is something more than mean in thus criticising the dresses of performers: we had better at once have a jury of tailors and mantua-makers, and let them be authorised to determine the exact cost of each suit, and say whether Lady Macbeth's gown is to be satin or bombazeen. Good God! what will foreigners think of us when they read such things? We, who are so celebrated in the world for riches and generosity! We to descend to this prying minutiae! it is too bad. The French have often called us a nation of shopkeepers, and it will now be bandied about from one corner of Europe to another; — from Cadiz to Kamshatka; and from Archangel to the Morea. Why

was the theatre itself so splendid, but to be an ornament to the nation? and, after spending 150,000*l.* on the theatre, are we to grumble because Mrs. Siddons's dress has cost a few pounds more than strict economy would warrant. As for the Italian singer, she is now out of the question, which, I for one, am very glad of, because it would have been a contaminating precedent, if she had been suffered to remain; but I do not believe the public were screwed on her account, as it was no doubt judged that she would bring in to the amount of her salary, however large. As the remaining part of the paragraph is built on this gentleman's "incontrovertible calculations," comment is deemed unnecessary, only it may be observed, it is a pity his friends did not take his advice, and stay away, rather than cause such a disgraceful riot every night. Now for a word or two on the Morning Chronicle.—His reason for abstaining from the controversy, is certainly very plausible, and his respect for the drama it would be sacrilege to doubt, after witnessing his conduct since he wrote that, and we must also admit his sincerity when he says he would have acquiesced, if even a tolerable justification had been set up. Mr. Kemble's assurance that they were not making more than 6 per cent. it would appear was *not tolerable*, and we shall find hereafter, that the committee's report was *not tolerable*; but we shall have some difficulty in finding what *would have been tolerable*. As to the writer's wish for

the question to be fairly discussed, I can only answer, it is a pity he has not assisted to discuss it fairly, but has for the most part substituted declamation for discussion. His observations on the private boxes deserve consideration, and the reader will perceive in italics the best defence of them which could be written, and I shall most probably make use of it, when I come to answer a certain description of the assailants of those places. Why so much noise should be made about this tier of boxes being locked up from the public, I cannot see, except it is from that envious disposition which invariably is attached to little minds, who can see nothing in the possession of another, but they must have a share of it. Why did not you, Mr. Chronicler, step forward, when the building was in progress, and say, *it must be finished as I like; it must be according to my plan, or it will not please the public, whose organ I am.* Tell me, good sir, whether, if they had thought fit to make the pigeon-hole boxes on a level with the one-shilling gallery into private ones, you would not have said the "gods" were deprived of their just right. But I would ask you if you never took a box at any of the theatres a few days, or a week, before the performance. If you have, you made that a *private box* for that night, and, if you could do it for one night, you might for a dozen nights, or every night through the season; by such means, you see, all the boxes might be rendered private, and yet no

one could find fault. Then why should this single tier, being made private, gall you so terribly, and particularly after your excellent defence of them, when you say they will be *very desirable on account of their exclusion from the riot and obscenity of the lobbies*. I am coming to a part in the extract from your paper, which gives me great pain to think what a dilemma, you and your fellow-labourer, the Times, have placed the managers in. According to the Times, 75,000*l.* raised in shares was *given to them*, and according to you, they pay an *exorbitant interest for it*. This is really placing the poor managers between two fires with a vengeance.

14. The people do feel themselves aggrieved ; and there is something peculiarly ungenerous in the time and manner of the advance. The *time* chosen for the act is, when the public are deprived of the rival theatre ; and when, thereby, Covent Garden is enabled to play *every night, instead of three times a week*, which one would think might of itself have satisfied the proprietors. The *manner* in which it is justified, is that, by locking up from the public, one principal tier of boxes, they have narrowed the accommodation, and therefore demand a higher price for that which is left.

*Morning Chronicle, Sept. 20, 1809.*

The theatres have always at the beginning of the season, for about three weeks, played only on the alternate nights, and because the new theatre was enabled at first to play every night, you bring this paltry circumstance forward, as a reason why that

was not a proper time for raising the prices. I have already given my opinion why the first opening was the most proper, and this argument of yours does not tend to alter it. But admitting that the proprietors had for the first season gained one or two per cent. more from having less opposition, than if Drury Lane had been open, should we, as generous Britons, look with an evil eye at what would only have been a just remuneration for their exertions? No! we should rather have exulted to find merit rewarded.

15. Nearly at the conclusion of the farce, Mr. Mundem came forward, and attempted to address the audience; but, before he could procure a hearing, Mr. Kemble appeared, and it being supposed that his intention was to announce the determination of the proprietors to return to the old prices, he was received with a thunder of applause. Mr. Kemble, however, began by *expressing himself truly thankful for their kind indulgence in permitting him to address them, to assure them how happy the proprietors were, at all times, to attend to the accommodation and wishes of the public; he was therefore desirous to know what they had to complain of?* This last sentence was followed by a volley of groans and hisses, and, in answer, the words "old prices" were exhibited *in every part of the house.*

After this, Mr. Kemble endeavoured, but in vain, to procure a hearing, and retired amidst the most marked disapprobation of the audience.

*Times, Sept. 21, 1809.*

16. The fact is, that large fortunes have been made by theatrical proprietorship, and till we see the treasurer's debtor and creditor account *for the last five years*, verified by his oath, *nothing shall persuade us to the contrary*. How many people would jump at a licence to build a new theatre for the performance of plays, at 6s. and 3s. 6d. only ! It is worse than idle to compare exclusive patentees with "manufacturers or tradesmen:" there is no competition in one case, which there is in the other.

*Times, Sept. 21, 1809.*

We have here a description of the manner in which Mr. Kemble *wished* to address the house, as well as the manner in which he was received. His submissively desiring to know "what they had to complain of," has been, by the ill-disposed, tortured into the snappish expression, "What do you want?" and from this only many of his opponents attempt to justify themselves ; because, say they, it was not treating the public respectfully. As to their refusing to hear Mr. Kemble at all after that, I will only say, that though there might be many respectable men, and women too, who assisted in the clamour, yet it tallies so exactly with the conduct of a savage mob, whether before the hustings in Covent Garden market, or in the pit of Covent Garden theatre, that I find myself unable to draw the distinction.



17. The expression of public discontent, which we notice at the theatre on Monday and Tuesday nights, was last night still louder and more general. *It seemed to be the proceeding of a well-disciplined and well-combined corps, acting under judicious and resolute leaders; every one appeared to understand the justice of the cause for which he struggled, and the means by which it was to be attained.* We cannot dismiss this subject without expressing our opinion, that after the very decisive and unequivocal tone in which the public sentiment was manifested last night, the proprietors cannot persist in their objectionable demands, without exposing themselves to the imputation of a culpable pertinacity, and very seriously risking the peace of the town.

*Chronicle, Sept. 21, 1809.*

I will say nothing about the former part of this extract, because it seems to bear so closely on proceedings which are expected to take place in a certain quarter. The Morning Chronicle, the "friend of the people," says they seemed to understand each other, and so says the A—— G——. But for the latter part, it is impossible not to admire it. Mr. Kemble (obstinate man!) would rather expose himself "to the imputation of culpable pertinacity," than be ruined in his fortune: he would rather "risk the peace of the town," than the property of a few individuals:—this is undoubtedly a degree of "pertinacity" that can never be sufficiently reprobated.

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18. Junius observed "that the people of England were patient to a certain point, but that when provoked beyond that, their resistance was not to be withstood." The managers of this theatre appear to be of a different opinion. Provocation they seem resolved to carry to the utmost extreme, apparently regardless of consequences.

This proposition (for a committee) appeared to the audience to have so much the *complexion of a trick*, that it served only to inflame their indignation; and we must confess that their conception of the subject was not unfair.

It may be calculated upon that the opposition of the public, if once allayed, would not be apt to revive. At all events, it is worth the while of those, whom that opposition annoys, to make the experiment: but the public are not to be *hoaxed*!

*Chronicle, Sept. 23, 1809.*

What could this foolish man mean by such raving as we see above? What does he wish people to understand by the provocation which the managers were carrying to the utmost extreme?—Surely he does not mean to say that, whether they could afford it or not, they should act at the old prices. This would be shewing a deference to public opinion, which might be highly pleasing to the conductors of the Morning Chronicle, but from every person of sound judgment the managers would justly bring on themselves the imputation of culpable weakness.

How the managers' submitting their accounts to a committee could wear the "complexion of a trick," is to me most wonderful. Yet the Chronicle thinks

that the "conception of the subject" by the audience "was not unfair." If this extract from that wretched paper should, fifty years hence, meet the eye of an impartial reader, it will most assuredly cause a more than ordinary degree of astonishment. Should this reader be an historian, searching for materials to assist him in describing the manners of this age, he will, no doubt, delineate us as a nation of barbarous monsters, or we would never have suffered to exist amongst us a man, who could so far set common sense at defiance, or rather one who could be so outrageously impudent as to tell his countrymen, that to endeavour to give them every satisfaction was a "trick."

Throughout the whole of the above paragraph from the Chronicle there seems a very great degree of uneasiness lest the proposed committee should so far satisfy the public, that they would agree to the new prices; and his fears that the opposition, if once allayed, would not be apt to revive, sound extremely well when read along with his regard for the "peace of the town" in a former paragraph. The fact seems to be, that the conductors of this paper have been actuated by a vile species of ambition; they have been afraid of the manager's justifying themselves; and, right or wrong, they wished the old prices to be restored, merely that they might have a share of the glory due to all who had a hand in completing so desirable a restoration!

*Address of the Proprietors.*

“The public are most respectfully informed by the proprietors, that the theatre will be closed till the Committee of Gentlemen, to whose investigation their books and accounts are to be submitted, have examined and made up their opinions upon them.”

19. **TIMES.**—We shall be anxious to know who compose this one-sided committee. *The public would doubtless have excluded lawyers.* Let the committee's report state the receipts and payments of each year, *for the last ten years*, and the particulars of those receipts and payments; this had better be done at once, for nothing short of this will satisfy the public. The more we consider the affair of the committee, the more are we convinced that no real good can result from its investigations. First, who can be procured as gratuitous commissioners? If none, who are to pay hired commissioners?—certainly not the public; and if the managers, such commissioners become mere stipendiaries, who must oblige those from whom they receive their hire. As to Mr. Kemble's saying they only received 6 per cent. *this proves nothing, but that the concern has been managed at a great expence.*

*Times, Sept. 25, 1809.*

The intemperate style in which the above is written almost precludes the necessity of comment; yet I must be allowed to ask, why are you so anxious about the committee? why are lawyers to be excluded? why could you not wait to see what the committee's report was? Why, I ask, all this anxiety, but that, like the Chronicle, you too were afraid of the report satisfying the public, and thus

endeavoured to raise a prejudice against the authors of it? In your enquiry respecting whether the commissioners would sit gratuitously or not, you exhibit every trait of a narrow sordid mind; and I should charge myself with insulting the gentlemen of the committee, were I to endeavour to defend them against such pitiful insinuations. As to what you say about the concern being managed at a great expence, there is every appearance of its having been founded on your "incontrovertible calculations," and as such not to be overturned. In another part of the paper from which the above extract was made, I believe you spoke of extravagant salaries, as being the most grievous expence; and as this is a ground on which most of your followers build their arguments, it requires a more particular answer than most of what you have said. I wish first to know, if you will assert that Messrs. Harris, Kemble, and Co. offer more salary to Mrs. Siddons, Madame Catalani, or Master Betty, than they demand?—No! Do they give as much?—No, not always; but still they give very high salaries? Why do they give such high salaries: merely for this plain and simple reason, because they fill the house so well as to remunerate them. It is not always that their talents command so much money, but popularity, a spurious popularity, very often supplies the place of talent. Nobody now will say that Master Betty was deserving of 50*l.* per night, and yet it paid the managers very well for a time to give him that; and if

Mrs. Siddons were engaged for this season, at 50l. a night, though her talents are of the most splendid kind, and her equal not to be found; the managers would hardly comply with her demand, were they not sure, that the treasury would feel the benefit of her exertions. Messrs. Harris and Kemble, would not uselessly squander their money away.—The same argument, will apply to all the other performers.—Theatrical amusements have become very popular, theatrical talents are, consequently, in great demand, and any thing so situated fetches a high price.

*Report of the Committee upon the state of Covent-Garden Theatre.*

The Committee for examining the affairs of Covent-Garden Theatre, consisting of the following gentlemen, Alderman Sir Charles Price, Bart. M. P. Sir Thomas Plumer, Knight, his majesty's Solicitor-General, John Sylvester, Esq. Recorder of the City of London, John Whitmore, Esq. Governor of the Bank of England, and John Julius Angerstein, Esq. have authorised the proprietors to publish the following report in their names :—

We do hereby certify, that, after a full and attentive examination of the subject which we have been desired to investigate, by the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, for the satisfaction of the public, in respect to the rate of profit received by them from the late theatre, and likely to be received from the new, that the following is the result of our inquiry :—

The rate of profit actually received upon an average of the last six years, commencing in 1803 (the period of the present co-partnership in the theatre), upon the capital embarked therein, we have ascertained to have amounted to 6 three-eighths per cent. per annum, charging the concern with only the sum actually paid for insurance on such part of the capital as was insured ; but, if the whole of the capital had been insured, the profit would have been reduced to very little more than five per cent. and, for want of this full insurance, the proprietors being in part their own insurers, sustained a loss by the late fire, for which no compensation has been made to the amount of more than the whole of their profits for the above period of six years.

The rate of profit likely to be received in future from the new theatre, depending in part upon the amount of bills not yet delivered, and of estimates not fully ascertained, had on the future receipts of the house, which are subject to various contingencies, cannot be ascertained with the same degree of certainty ; but, upon the best consideration we have been able to give to this subject, after having recourse to every source of information, oral and written, we are fully satisfied that the future profits of the new theatre, at the proposed advance in the prices of admission, will amount to only three and a half per cent. per annum upon the capital expended in the theatre, if the same be insured ; and that, upon the same supposition of insurance, at the former prices of admission, the proprietors will, in our judgment, annually sustain a loss of near  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum, on their capital.

CHARLES PRICE.

THOMAS PLUMER.

JOHN SYLVESTER.

JOHN WHITMORE.

JOHN JULIUS ANGERSTEIN.

The proprietors have the honour of presenting to the public the report of the gentlemen who kindly undertook the investigation of the accounts of the theatre, and cannot but feel assured that a liberal and enlightened people will now be convinced, that the alteration in their prices arises solely from the impossibility of the continuing the public amusements on the former terms of admission.

*Statement of the Accounts of Covent-Garden Theatre for the last Six Years, most respectfully offered to the Public.*

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
1803-4 Received	61,682	13	10	Paid	58,926	18	7
1804-5 Ditto	70,727	9	10	Do.	81,057	11	6
1805-6 Ditto	56,065	16	5	Do.	47,975	2	2
1806-7 Ditto	68,126	7	5	Do.	68,391	6	4
1807-8 Ditto	63,038	14	7	Do.	62,406	8	3
1808-9 Ditto	46,342	13	0	Do.	47,334	11	2
<hr/>							
	365,983	17	1				
Allowed for outstanding debts, which must be	}			-	-	Do.	8,000
				<hr/>			
				374,091	18	0	
Deduct what was drawn out by the proprietors	}						
				58,179	18	0	
				<hr/>			
				315,912	0	0	
Profit for 6 years, divided by 6				50,071	17	1	
				<hr/>			
				365,983	17	1	
				<hr/>			
Average of each year				8,345	6	2	

R. HUGHES, Treasurer.

JOHN TULL, Dep. Treasurer.

Sworn before me, the 26th Sept. 1809.

C. FLOWER, Mayor.



The gentlemen who, for the public satisfaction, kindly formed a committee for examining the accounts of Covent-Garden Theatre, have most faithfully discharged the office to which they were invited by the proprietors, and spared neither time nor pains in order to draw justly the conclusions which are contained in their report. They were occupied on the task they had generously imposed on themselves for three whole days, from morning till evening; on Monday, the last day of their meeting, they did not rise till near eleven at night :—they examined such witnesses, belonging to both theatres, as were most likely to give them proper information :—they searched minutely into the books of the Treasury, in which all the receipts and disbursements were entered at the time, for six years back, and scrupulously confronted them with the banker's books, and all the original vouchers: they had recourse to Mr. Smirke, on points of expence relative to the building, and examined Mr. Copland, besides between twenty and thirty artificers employed in the erection of the theatre, touching their several bills: they omitted no investigation relative to the scenery, wardrobe, music, and every material article of expence: they asked and received from the different offices the rate of insurance for the theatres; they formed the most careful calculations of the number of persons likely in future to resort to the theatre, grounded on an exact knowledge of the number admitted nightly in each of the six years into the boxes, pit, and galleries, at whole and half-price, or by free admissions. These complicated numerical calculations they checked and compared in every way that could help to render them accurate, and in every doubtful point they have always given the turn in favour of the public: they found large heads of future unavoidable expenditure much under-rated, as the scenery, wardrobe, machinery of all kinds, music, &c. and were convinced that the capital necessary for the proper conduct of the business, must very heavily exceed what it has hitherto been calculated at.

The following may be depended upon as an exact account of the proportions of space allotted to the audience in the new Theatre-Royal, Covent-Garden, in the old theatre, and in Drury-lane. The boxes are calculated to hold the same number of spectators in the present as in the old theatre, but 140 more persons are now provided with seats in the lower circles; six feet six inches is the averaged depth allowed to the three rows in each box. Six feet three inches was allowed in the old theatre, and six feet in Drury-lane. In the old theatre 20 seats were contained in the pit; their whole declivity three feet; in the new theatre there are also 20 seats, but their declivity is four feet nine inches. In the two shilling gallery of the old theatre, a person seated in the back row was 88 feet from the stage door; in the present theatre he is only 86, and in Drury-lane he was 100. In the upper gallery of the old theatre, the last row was ninety-three feet from the stage-door; in the present it is eighty-five; and in Drury-lane theatre it was 104. The upper gallery in the new theatre will contain about fourscore, and the two shilling gallery about fifty more persons than the old one did.

### COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE.

The average annual profit on the property of Covent Garden Theatre, as stated in the printed report of the committee, having been misrepresented, it becomes necessary, for the satisfaction of the public, to declare, that, after deducting the legal interest of five per cent. on their capital, no more than 1 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. remains to the proprietors for their whole profits.



We were sorry to observe the opposition to the advanced prices, *assume a character last night, very different from what it appeared at first.* The statement published by the proprietors, is certainly not so precise as it ought to have been; *at the same time, it sufficiently proves that a thea-*

*trical concern is far from being so productive as has been generally supposed. We again repeat our former recommendations: let those who will not submit to what they consider an imposition, abstain from frequenting the theatre for a few weeks, and they will, most probably, have the satisfaction of being accommodated at the Old Prices.*

*Times, Oct. 5, 1809.*

Here gentle reader, is a neat turn for you,—you will probably look upon this, as a complete renunciation of all his former sentiments; but no, that would not do, he would have to bear all the sarcasms of the “public” in the pit; and all the sneers of his friends of the press.—But my good man of the Times, where were all your “incontrovertible calculations,” when you wrote the above? if they were really “incontrovertible;” the above account should have no influence over you, as the difference between 25 per cent. and  $6\frac{3}{8}$  is surely worth consideration; but if you do thus abandon those brats of your imagination, those “incontrovertible calculations,” why should you advise your friends to abstain from frequenting the theatre, that the prices might be reduced.—I am confident you did not wish the proprietors to get less than  $6\frac{3}{8}$  per cent.—then surely there is something unaccountable in your conduct, in giving such advice;—The fact is, you dreaded the public, you dreaded inconsistency, (preferring consistent wrong), and you disliked Mr. Kemble—all these combined, would not suffer you to do justice.

Since the above date, the Times has been gradually sliding into neutral ground; he has published

a number of insidious letters, tending to bring theatres and actors into contempt; which, certainly, did not look very well, after saying that “*theatrical amusements are become habitual to the inhabitants of the metropolis, and from a part of what may be considered as an established recreation.*” \* The writer in the Times should know, that if we encourage any man, or set of men, to lay out their money in purchasing articles for our use, or pleasure, we should be acting the part of bad citizens if we were to set about ridiculing those same articles to make their customers ashamed of buying them; and we most assuredly did give, at least, a tacit encouragement to Messrs. Harris and Kemble, to build a theatre for us. However, as the Times has by this time, most probably repented of his error, I will leave him *for the present* to attend the honest Chronicle. If strict chronological order were adhered to, the report should be taken into consideration, but I wish to have done with the extracts from the Chronicle first.

21. Our *predictions* with regard to the conduct of the managers of this theatre, have been completely fulfilled. The *calculations which we made when Mr. Kemble announced his intention of nominating judges* to decide between him and the public, have been *fully justified*. The public are dissatisfied with the decision of Mr. Kemble’s tribunal, and their dissatisfaction was most loudly expressed last night.

Indeed, *we were prepared* for this result, when we read the report of that tribunal. We could not suppose that such a report would have the effect desired by those by whom it was drawn up or dictatèd. But we abstained from stating our opinion yesterday, lest we should be exposed to the *imputation of wishing to inflame the public mind*. We waited for the verdict of the public *with deference*, and that verdict has served to justify and heighten the respect we have always entertained for their judgment. *The public are rarely wrong when sufficiently informed*, and upon this occasion, their attention has been so much drawn, that the question between the managers and the audience seemed in almost every private circle, to have excluded every other topic.—Why should a deduction be made for outstanding debts?—Should the public be taxed to supply the improvidence of the managers?—As to the sum drawn out by the proprietors, as it is termed, we confess that we are not satisfied on that head.

*Morning Chronicle, Oct. 5, 1809.*

It is laughable enough to hear this man talk about his “predictions” being fulfilled; he knew very well that scores of those who visit the theatre were every morning waiting with open mouths to know what he, their Oracle, had to say on the subject, and would as soon have thought of flying, as of acting otherwise than as he dictated.

Why the report of that tribunal was not to have the effect desired by those by whom it was drawn up, I shall shortly enquire, and, in the mean time, beg to express my unbounded admiration at the delicacy of the Chronicle, in “abstaining from stating

his opinion" before the " verdict of the public" was known.

O shade of Sterne, step in to my assistance! " Of all the cants which are canted in this canting world, though the cant of criticism may be the most tormenting, *that of hypocrisy is the worst.*" —He did not wish to influence the public!—The servile adulation paid to the authors of an illiberal clamour which follows, is most disgusting.—As to the public being "*sufficiently informed,*" I will be bold to say, there never in this world was a question publicly discussed, where so much ignorance was shewn; there never was one where so much illiberality was shewn; there never was one where the press so grossly abused its powers; and yet this silly writer talks of the public being "*sufficiently informed.*"

You ask why a deduction should be made for outstanding debts, and should the public be taxed to supply the improvidence of the managers? These questions are of so strange a nature, that it is difficult to compose one's mind sufficiently to answer them. There can be no other reason for allowing for outstanding debts than, that debts were outstanding, and this, to most people, will be sufficient; but how you can prove that the managers had been improvident, because they still owed money, I am at a loss to know—We can hardly sup-

pose the managers pay ready money for every thing they have.—If you are not satisfied as to the sum drawn out by the proprietors, I will endeavour to do it when I come to their report.

22. It is really *painful* to be obliged, in justice to the public, and in the faithful discharge of our duty, to question the accuracy of a report made by gentlemen of character, upon the view of accounts submitted to them.—Various objections occur to the account rendered.

1. The last season ought not to be taken into the average. The company was driven from place to place. They had no regular season, and yet the deficiency of that year is brought in to diminish the aggregate receipt, and the average is taken from six years. Take away the last year from both sides, and divide the remainder by five, the product will be 10,214*l.* 15*s.* per annum, instead of 8345*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.* or 7*l.* 17*s.* per cent. profit, instead of 6*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

2. In estimating the profits on the capital employed, the sum of 130,000*l.* *is to be deducted*, because upon that sum, they have no right to ask for profit, since they did not advance it. There is a sum of 3,750*l.* per annum to be paid, indeed, for 85 years, and this is an annual charge on the house. Now if that charge stands in the account, and they also calculate profit on the 75,000*l.* it is a gross error, for they are both to take interest and profit on it.

I can readily give you credit for feeling pain in the "*faithful* discharge of your duty." It must have been evident long since that you were ready to sacrifice every thing—aye, even your reputation—for the "public good." So you think the last season should not be included? Well, admit that, what follows? why, that they are gaining 7*l.* 17*s.* per cent. instead of 6*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* O! what incorrigible rogues must the managers be, not to be satisfied with 7*l.* 17*s.* per cent. on their capital. I am certain the proprietors of the Times and Morning Chronicle would be delighted if they realised so much: but of this more anon. I do not clearly understand the Chronicle, when he talks of deducting 130,000*l.* from the capital: there is evidently some mistake in that; he must mean 75,000*l.* But why should it be deducted? The interest, 3,750*l.* no doubt is part of the money stated to be drawn out by the proprietors; so that they are *not* both taking "interest and profit on it."

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23. It is so clearly the policy of the state to encourage the theatre (here the writer is recommending a new theatre) as the sure means of cultivating the arts, and enlightening as well as meliorating the people, that in all polished countries it has received the protection of government.—It is the mystery which hangs over the statement and report of the committee of which the public complain. Let



the items be fairly laid before them, and they will form a fair, and we are sure, a liberal judgment.

*Morning Chronicle*, Oct. 7, 1809.

We cannot here help remarking a very different tone and manner from the writer's former columns. But what items does he want? does he wish to have a verbatim copy from the treasurer's cash-book, for six years, printed in a neat folio volume, and a copy sent, with the manager's respectful compliments to every O. P.?

On the report, which speaks so plainly for itself, I cannot have much to say; but this I must say of it, that, if viewed dispassionately, there is undoubtedly sufficient in it to satisfy every reflecting person that the profits of a theatrical concern are far from being large.

It appears that the commissioners ascertained the profits for the last six years, that is, from the first of Mr. Kemble's connection with the theatre, to average "6 $\frac{3}{8}$  per cent. per annum, charging the concern with only the sum actually paid for insurance on such part of the capital as was insured." Now the "sum actually insured, as may be seen in another place, was 44,500*l.* and the capital which ought to have been insured was, according to the above statement, 130,000*l.* which may be ascertained thus:—If 6 $\frac{3}{8}$  require 100*l.* then 8345*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.* requires 130,000*l.* nearly. But though the mana-

gers did not insure at the offices, and thus became their own insurers for about two-thirds of their capital, ought they not to have charged insurance on the whole? Surely they ought, and thus their profits would have been reduced to near 5 per cent. If any one should doubt this, let him ask any merchant, who is in the habit of importing goods from distant parts of the world, and who is generally his own insurer, if he does not always consider the rate of insurance when he sets a price on his merchandise?—he will answer him, yes; and for this reason, “Because I sometimes lose a cargo, and the sums of money which I have at different times received for insurance help to indemnify me for such loss.” Then the profits clearly were “very little more than 5 per cent.” But the account is objected to by a great many, who say, from its extreme brevity, nothing certain can be collected from it. There is much difficulty in satisfying gentlemen of this description: perhaps the fault may be looked for elsewhere than in the “baldness,” as the Times called it, of the account; but the committee did not undertake to furnish intellect. However, I shall endeavour to lay the matter down so plain, that “he who runs may read.” I have taken the liberty of stating the account in what I consider a more intelligible manner.

Now, reader, I will only suppose you to be a man of common understanding, and desire you to

imagine the books of the theatre laid open before you ; and here nothing more is wanted than the cash-book, that is, the book where all receipts are placed on one side, and all disbursements on the other. On the receipt side you will find all the money which has been taken at the doors every night throughout the season ; all the money received for private boxes, which are let annually ; and, in fact, every thing which is received on account of the house must be entered there. Now, as the treasurer kept his cash in a banker's hands, there is the banker's book to confront with this cash-book (and indeed it appears it was "scrupulously confronted with the banker's books"), so that no error could possibly happen on that side. Well, then we go over to the other side ; that is, to the disbursements, and we shall find them to consist of salaries to performers, music, authors, wardrobe, machinery, scene-painting, &c. &c.

Here then, if there were any thing put down which had not been paid, the banker's book would have exposed it at once ; and as no such exposure took place, we may certainly presume that every thing was fair. But some very liberal-minded gentlemen have been pleased to say that the gentlemen of the committee were interested, and as such, not to be depended on. How interested ?—why, Sir Charles Price supplies the house with oil, and Mr. Angerstein has a private box ! I will not insult

those respectable gentlemen, by offering to defend them from such an imputation as that of setting their hands to what they knew to be a false account, and that too from such pitiful motives. The best method is, to ask any of those silly calumniators if *they* would do so for such a consideration; when they will immediately answer, No! Aye the most despicable and least honourable of them will say No! with the greatest seeming indignation, and thus declare themselves *more honourable* men than Sir Charles Price and Mr. Angerstein.

. Respecting the sum drawn out by the proprietors, which the Chronicle was not satisfied with, I need say but very little. It appears, that in the course of six years the proprietors had drawn out, for their private use, 58,179*l.* 18*s.*; and for the same time, their profits amounted to 50,071*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.* so that they reduced their capital more than 8,000*l.* This, I believe, is no uncommon thing, but very often necessary: all that it shews is, that the concern is not in such a thriving way as it ought to be. But does the Chronicle think the gentlemen of the committee would be any way deceived respecting that sum? They would surely know, by looking at every item in the cash-book, whether it was for the payment of a carpenter's bill, or cash for Mr. Kemble's private use.

But the Times says the Theatre has been mismanaged for the last six years. There is in this assertion something so vague, something so foolish, and

something so wicked, that it carries its own antidote with it; yet it may be well enough to ask in what this mismanagement consisted, and how was the editor of the Times to know it? The answer shall be left to the gentleman himself: in the mean time, I shall present him with something to “chew upon.” It will be in the recollection of most people, that in the month of May last almost all the daily papers were raised in price one halfpenny, in consequence of a bill brought into parliament by Mr. Perceval, permitting them so to do, without taking off the discount on stamps. The Times was not the most backward in taking advantage of this permission, but it was among the foremost in pleading the necessity for it. Let us then examine the produce of the Times at the “Old Prices.”

This paper, as I have said elsewhere, has a most extensive circulation, I should think seven or eight thousand; we will take it at six thousand.

	£.	s.	d.
6000 papers, at 11s. for 27 (trade price when at 6d.)	122	4	5
From which deduct			
6000 stamps, at 3½d.	-	87	10 0
Less, 16l. 18s. per cent. disc.		14	15 9
		<hr/>	
		72	14 3
Paper, at 24s. per ream	-	-	15 0 0
Ink, printer's wages, use of types,			
waste stamps, unsold papers, &c.			
&c. say	-	-	9 10 2
		<hr/>	
		97	4 5
		<hr/>	
Clear gain of the paper each day	-	£25	0 0

The advertisements of such a paper as the Times produce little less, if any thing, than 40% a day, as any one may calculate, allowing 6s. for the smallest advertisements, and the larger in proportion, and deducting from each 3s. for stamp duty: we will say, making allowances for parliamentary debates, &c. 30% a day clear, under the head of advertisements.

Then 25% added to 30% is 55% and multiplied by 313, the number of publishing days in a year, gives - - - - - £17,115 0 0  
 From which deduct, for clerk's salaries, reporters, correspondents, foreign and domestic, house rent, &c. &c. the odd - 7,115 0 0  
 And there remains a clear profit annually of £10,000 0 0

I have said nothing of the puff paragraphs, attacks and defences, &c. &c. for all which they receive sums of money which would astonish those who have never heard of such matters.

To know whether the above sum of 10,000% per annum is an exorbitant gain or not, we must enquire what capital the proprietors of this paper employ, and if we say 10,000%. I think it must be confessed to be more than sufficient. Well then, with a capital of 10,000% the proprietors of the Times gain annually 10,000%; that is, they double their capital every year. In other words, they make cent. per cent. of their money; and with this they are not

satisfied, but give the following paragraph to the public, to shew the *necessity of advancing their price!!!*

We trust we shall not have occasion to expend many words, in order to prove to our customers the *necessity we are under* of laying a small additional price upon our journal. The projected regulation, in the propriety of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has acquiesced, will raise every newspaper one half-penny. The last settlement upon this subject took place with government in the year 1797, since which period it would be superfluous to mention the increased price of every article that goes to the composition of a newspaper. Paper has risen from 20s. to 30s. in the thousand; wages, 10 per cent; printing ink, 35 per cent.; types to double the price; and so of every other article.

*Times, May 19, 1809.*

Here, Englishmen, is a clue to the over-suspicious conduct of the Times. Here you see, that with a profit of 10,000% on 10,000%, with cent. per cent. they are not satisfied, but give you the above whining reasons why they should have nearly 4000% a year more. Most men are apt to judge the conduct of others by themselves, and therefore we can now clearly discover the source from whence such dastardly and illiberal remarks were made on the managers of Covent Garden theatre.

Quéry—Mr. Walter, are the above “incontrovertible calculations,” or can you overturn them?

My labours are now drawing near to a close, and I trust they will not be useless: if they tend but to open the eyes of even a small portion of my countrymen, I shall not begrudge the time I have spent in composing this pamphlet. I cannot help thinking that I have, for the most part, been successful in refuting the arguments (if arguments they may be called) of the opponents of the proprietors of Covent Garden theatre: but indeed I take no credit to myself on that head; for I defy any man possessed of sound judgment, and a competent share of knowledge, to read even the extracts only, and not be convinced that the ingredients of which they are composed are ignorance, illiberality, and hypocrisy.

\* If I could suppose it possible, that any man who prides himself on the possession of a soul, who thinks himself a reasoning animal, could yet go coolly to Covent Garded theatre, for the purpose of reducing the managers to the necessity of lowering their prices, *and consequently to ruin themselves*, I would ask him—Do you, sir, wish the prices to be reduced because the proprietors are making too much money? You will not answer in the affirmative, because you would thereby shew that argument was lost upon you, and that you were, as to intellect, little above a native of Qtaheite. Do you wish then to reduce the prices, because the managers have not treated you respectfully enough? I can no where discover those signs of disrespect



which you are so forward to urge, unless you mean to say that whenever Mr. Kemble came before your high mightinesses, he should have prostrated himself to the ground, and not have dared to stir till your supreme will was known. For shame! gentlemen, for shame! What! and do *you* require such things of Mr. Kemble? *you*, who are, for the most part, the greatest sticklers for liberty! *you*, who are eternally bawling in our ears that liberty is gone! that man's freeborn energies are cramped by tyrants. Is not Mr. Kemble an Englishman, as well as ourselves? Has he not got the same feelings, the same idea of the natural dignity of man, which, as Britons, we are all so proud to boast of? Is he not possessed of the most splendid talents, and of a more than ordinary share of learning, both of which tend to lift man above his fellow creatures, to exalt him in the scale of created beings, instead of suffering him to demean himself by crouching and licking the dust, just as he is commanded by the shouts of a senseless mob. Read his address before the opening of the house, and say if there is any thing of disrespect in that? Carry back your recollection to the first night, when he stood the "pelting of the pitiless storm" for several minutes, endeavouring, but in vain, to obtain a hearing:—did you see any disrespect in that? No! Then where is this disrespect to be found? In employing Jews to quell the rioters, whereas they ought to have been coaxed over to his cause. There you have

hit on something which deserves a little consideration. You will then please to recollect, that several nights passed before any such thing was done, as employing Jews ; *coaxing* had no effect, even after the statement of the committee ;— What was to be done ? The proprietors had published an account, sufficient to satisfy every reasonable creature, that their profits were very small, even at the advanced price ; and they found no abatement in the opposition to them—What could they think ? They beheld their property wasted at the rate of at least three hundred pounds each night, and could not calculate on any termination to it, without vigorous proceedings ; what would have been your course in such a business, my good Sir ? Could you have contemplated with a philosophic calmness, the nightly destruction of your property ? If not, tax not too harshly, the proceedings which men in such a desperate cause had recourse to. We do not always chuse the best expedients, though our intentions may be the purest.—When Charles XII. of Sweden, was shut up in his castle, at Bender, he was not aware that he was going to use an improper instrument to extinguish the fire, when he snatched up the barrel of brandy, and threw it on the flames. Just so with the managers and their servants, employing the Jews ; the necessity of the moment called for something, and that something, when it came, might be improper.—Since, then, you will hardly wish the price to be lowered on either of the foregoing heads, I suppose

it must be, because the private boxes exist? No, surely, you will not argue thus. But what is it you have to say respecting these boxes? you will find them defended in a former page, where I turned the weapons of your friend, the Chronicle, against himself; but there was one, and certainly not the least serious point of view, in which I did not take the matter up.—You have said, they were likely to be destructive to morality; that they would be the seat of intrigues and assignations; and that it was impossible for a modest woman ever to shew her face in them.—Well, my good moral friend, you reason admirably, and steer quite clear of puritainical cant—But let us look into your argument a little,—Do you imagine, that a whole party will retire into one of these anti-rooms to intrigue; do you imagine that any two of the party will do it? They might as well, in my opinion, find a place at home for the purpose, and would no doubt prefer it, were they so inclined.—Do you suppose, that one person only in a box, could form an intrigue with him, or herself? No! none of these. Then, as neither a party, nor two out of a party, nor one person, is likely to form intrigues, it can only be done by two persons going there for the express purpose; and surely if they had any such design before they went, there would be other places more likely to invite their steps than a playhouse.—In fact, it is a vulgar cry of *morality in danger*, set up by some of the most immoral of mankind. These boxes, as your friend the Chro-

nicle says, will be very desirable for a father and mother, to take their sons and daughters to, as they will there hear nothing of the indecencies of the lobbies, and surely it is no trivial matter, if the ears of youth can be preserved from such assailants.

Since then, you will not clamour for the reduction of prices, on the ground of the proprietors getting exorbitant profits; as you would thereby not only shew the grossest ignorance of the question you are deciding an opinion on, but would be supposing five respectable gentlemen to have acted in a manner, so knavish and so foolish, that, the lowest character in society would blush to be thought guilty of such conduct; since you will not ask for their reduction, on the ground that the managers have not treated you with proper respect, because you find, when it comes to be examined, that the managers have shewn you no disrespect whatever, but have, on the contrary, behaved with exemplary patience, when nightly witnessing the destruction of their property; since you would not ask for their reduction, on the ground that the private boxes ought to be made public, as you would thus be declaring to the world your possession of a mean and envious disposition, which is always craving for what others possess; and since you would not, for the same reason, help to create a disturbance in the house, for the express purpose of getting the prices lowered, and the private boxes made public; then do, my good sir, if you

value the proud name of Englishman, desist from this disgraceful opposition to men, whose greatest crime is having placed more confidence in your generosity than subsequent events warrant.

The above questions and observations, I address personally to every man who bears the name of Briton ; they embrace, I believe, every objection which has been started against the proprietors, or at least, publicly so ; but there is one, which I have heard made in private companies, and in which I cannot help agreeing ; that is, to the boxes on a level with the one shilling and two shilling galleries, being charged the same as those in the other parts of the house. Now there is in this so much apparent unfairness that I would advise Messrs. Harris and Kemble to remedy it, if they can ; I am aware there will be some difficulty, from the same stair-cases leading to those as to the others, but if that could be got over, and those places charged not more than the pit, it would, I am persuaded, give satisfaction to all.

In undertaking to do what I am about to attempt, I shall certainly be charged, by most sober people, with an act of supererogation, and that is of endeavouring to convince the public, that neither Mr. Kemble nor Mrs. Siddons should be driven from the stage. Those who have witnessed the powers of that admired actress, whether she undertakes to

excite our horror in Lady Macbeth, or our pity in Isabella ; whether she exhibits to us, as in the banquet scene, all the dignity, elegance, and grace, of which we could suppose woman capable, or rivet our attention to her extraordinary powers in her more serious efforts, we must be equally astonished and delighted.

Formed for the tragic scene to grace the stage  
 With rival excellence of love and rage,  
 Mistress of each soft art, with matchless skill  
 To turn and wind the passions as she will.  
 When she to murder, whets the timorous thane,  
 I feel ambition rush thro' every vein;  
 Persuasion hangs upon her daring tongue,  
 My heart grows flint, and every nerve's new strung.

CHURCHILL.

Then is there a human being so callous to all the best feelings of our nature, as to say, let her go ; we can do very well without her ? Such a man might truly be said, to have affections dark as Erebus. It has been given out, that this is Mrs. Siddons's last season, I hope that it is not true ; but if guilt would attach to those who would attempt to drive Mrs. Siddons from the stage, as no doubt it would, I am sure, a no less share would equally attach to those, who wish to banish her brother. Besides, Mr. Kemble being the first tragedian England can boast ;

besides his delighting us, in his acting of Penruddock and Octavian ;—his enrapturing us in Hamlet and Macbeth ;—and his astonishing us, in Lear and Coriolanus ; besides his exquisite delineation of these characters, and many others, which need not be enumerated, when we see man in his greatest perfection ; when human nature seems to stand on tip-toe, and aspire to godlike attributes ; Besides these wonderful exertions of his genius as an actor, are we not indebted to him, more than to any other man, for the pains he has taken in getting up our favourite bard Shakespeare. I should think there is no man in this enlightened age, who will say, that Shakespeare is not an ornament to England ; then, surely, he who of all others has applied himself most to the study of Shakespeare, and to the dressing of him in a fascinating style, so that he might become the more generally known, deserves our gratitude instead of the loads of obloquy, which have been heaped upon him from so many quarters.

But Mr. Kemble's enemies say, he is proud and haughty ; it is possible he may be so. I cannot tell, as I never had the honour to speak to him any where, nor even see him off the stage. If he is so, all I can say to it is, I am sorry for it, for pride and haughtiness are not the most amiable of qualities. But let the reader remember this, Mr. Kemble has

some bitter enemies, and particularly among those who have the superintendence of the press. They can easily disseminate any thing prejudicial to a person's character, and that person's opportunity of repelling the same, is very small, compared with their opportunities of attack.

I cannot help inserting a short extract translated from the French papers a few days ago, and Englishmen would do well to keep it in view. They will see in what light foreigners, who are at too great a distance, and who are otherwise too little interested in this question, to enter into it with passions similar to ours, view our conduct: "We are ignorant of the result of these burlesque demonstrations of civil liberty, and these coarse displays of national spirit, which set every thing in a flame, merely to determine whether Madame Catani shall have the price she demands for songs; whether the theatre shall be open or shut; whether Mr. Kemble and his family shall, or shall not, be ruined:"

This needs no comment.

A very few words will suffice for what remains; namely, how far this question is connected with politics. I shall give no opinion, but content myself with taking a few names from their famous sub-



scription, and leave the reader to judge, if not po-  
litics, " what the devil brought them there."

A COBBETTITE.

SIR WM. RAWLINS.

SAM. MILLER, *Esquire*.

HENRY CLIFFORD, Barrister,

HENRY WHITE, Editor of the Independent  
Whig.

JOHN GALE JONES.

These are your British Worthies!

FINIS.









